DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 088 604 PS 007 198

AUTHOR	Jacobson, Claire; Drije, Carla
TITLE	The Organization of Work in a Preschool Setting: Work Relations Between Professionals and Paraprofessionals in Four Head Start Centers. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Bank Street Coll. of Education, New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO	OEO-4122
PUB DATE	Jul 73
NOTE	239p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$11.40
DESCRIPTORS	Employee Attitudes; Interpersonal Relationship; Interviews; *Paraprofessional School Personnel; *Preschool Programs; *Professional Personnel; Role Conflict; Self Concept; *Social Workers; Teacher Aides; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	*Project Head Start

ABSTRACT

This report describes work relations between teachers and teacher aides and between social workers and social service aides and focuses on an interpretation of differences in work relations between the teaching and social work components in Head Start. Specifically, attitudes of professionals toward the employment of paraprofessionals are investigated, including the types of role definitions evolved. Effects of employment on the paraprofessional in terms of status, self-image, and performance of family roles are also discussed. Results indicated that teachers had more positive attitudes toward teacher aides than social workers had towards social service aides. Results are discussed in terms of values and role perceptions of teachers versus social workers. (CS)

ED 088604

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

SCOPE OF INTEREST NOTICE
The ERIC Facility has assigned this document for processing to: PS | UD
In our judgement, this document is also of interest to the clearinghouses noted to the right. Indexing should reflect their special points of view.

THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK IN A PRESCHOOL SETTING: WORK RELATIONS BETWEEN PROFESSIONALS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS IN FOUR HEAD START CENTERS

Final Report

Claire Jacobson, Ph.D.
Carla Drije, M.A.

July 1973

Research Division
Bank Street College of Education
610 West 112th Street
New York, N. Y. 10025

PS 007198

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to grants with the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO 4122, CG 9928, OEO-CG-8034-A/O), Washington, D.C. 20506. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the United States Government.

Bank Street College Early Childhood Research Center
Herbert Zimiles, Ph.D., Director

Forward

The tumultuous beginning of Project Head Start, which entailed launching a nationwide preschool program in the face of limited facilities and a paucity of trained personnel, was accompanied by hastily conceived efforts to evaluate its effectiveness. Once the program had begun to stabilize, the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity developed a plan for securing the sustained participation of university researchers in a program of research and evaluation. Fourteen university-based, geographically distributed Head Start Evaluation and Research Centers were established to jointly participate in a centrally directed national evaluation and, at the same time, individually mount a program of research relevant to the needs of Head Start. The Bank Street College Research Division welcomed the opportunity to serve in this capacity. Upon completion of the national evaluation program, the Bank Street Evaluation and Research Center was invited to continue its research program under the auspices of OEO as an Early Childhood Research Center. Our productive association with OEO has been greatly facilitated by those charged with the responsibility for coordinating this national program of research and evaluation; it is a pleasure to acknowledge the valuable advice and assistance we have received from Drs. Edmund Gordon, John McDavid, Lois-ellen Datta and Edith Grotberg.

The Bank Street Center's program of research dealt with two major areas of investigation. Because the compensatory educational movement was so fundamentally concerned with upgrading children's academic competence and seemed, at least in some quarters, to be based upon an inadequate understanding of the nature of young children's thinking and learning, we chose to focus one part of our research effort on the study of cognitive development in young children, particularly children with deprived backgrounds. The second broad area of investigation, formulated by the sociologists and anthropologists of our interdisciplinary staff, was concerned with the manner in which organizational structure and dynamics affected the programs of Head Start centers. Impressed with the central role played by paraprofessionals in Head Start centers, Dr. Jacobson recognized the need to examine the problem of work relations between professionals and paraprofessionals. This report presents the outcome of her study of this problem.

Herbert Zimiles, Ph.D., Director
Early Childhood Research Center

Table of Contents

Page

PART I

Chapter 1. Introduction 1

Chapter 2.

Section 1. General Description of the Centers 6

Section 2. Selected Characteristics of Personnel Interviewed 27

PART II
WORK RELATIONS BETWEEN TEACHERS AND TEACHER AIDES
AT TIME ONE AND TIME TWO

Chapter 3. Williams Center 30

Chapter 4. Hull Center 49

Chapter 5. Adams Center 71

Chapter 6. Jefferson Center 90

Chapter 7. Inter-Center Commonalities and Variations in Work Relations 107

PART III
WORK RELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL
SERVICE AIDES AT TIME ONE AND TIME TWO

Chapter 8. Williams Center 118

Chapter 9. Hull Center 128

Chapter 10. Adams Center 149

Chapter 11. Jefferson Center 172

Chapter 12. Inter-Center Commonalities and Variations in Work Relations 195

PART IV

Chapter 13. Summary and Interpretation of Findings 207

Chapter 14. Implications of the Study and Recommendations 219

Appendix. The Meaning of Work: Paraprofessionals' Work Experience in Relation to Self-Image, Status, Performance of Family Roles and Further Schooling . . 226

PART I

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Objectives of the Study

Since the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 the indigenous poor have been employed as paraprofessionals in ever increasing numbers in a variety of institutional settings, including Head Start. The major rationales for their use were: (1) the desire to break down the impersonality and distance between the professional and the client by interposing a mediating person closely related by background to the client; and (2) to provide an institutional means for the poor to help themselves--through work and the opportunities it gives for the development of skills, knowledge and a sense of self-confidence. The achievement of these desired outcomes in practice is very much dependent on the kind of work relations which develop between paraprofessionals and their mentors, the professionals.

This report focuses on a description of work relations between, on the one hand, teachers and teacher aides and, on the other, social workers and social service aides and on an interpretation of differences in work relations between the teaching and social work components in Head Start. The data, on the basis of which these work relations are described and explicated, come mainly from in-depth interviews, with subsidiary information from classroom observations and staff meetings at four Head Start centers.

The questions or themes to which we have addressed ourselves in our study are the following:

1. What are the attitudes of professionals toward the employment of paraprofessionals?

2. What types of role definitions develop through time?

3. What kinds of socialization for the roles of paraprofessionals obtain?

4. Do paraprofessionals perform bridging roles, do they mediate the cultural and class gaps between middle-class professionals and the low-income clientele?

5. Do paraprofessionals identify with staff or with parents? Do they develop an autonomous paraprofessional identity?

6. What kind of work ethic develops?

7. What is the nature of work relations between paraprofessionals and professionals?

8. What are the effects of employment on paraprofessionals--consequences for status, self-image, performance of family roles, further schooling, and so forth?

Review of the Literature

A review of the literature on the utilization of paraprofessionals in the field of education revealed a lack of studies on the character of work relations between professionals and paraprofessionals. Thus, the Annotated Bibliography of Auxiliary Personnel in Education, prepared by Bank Street College of Education for the U.S. Office of Education (January 1969) describes articles and pamphlets on various aspects of the utilization of paraprofessionals in education (recruitment, qualifications, career ladders, costs, evaluation, etc.) but lists no references pertinent to the major theme of our study.

Alan Gartner's Paraprofessionals and Their Performance (New York: Praeger, 1971) provides an integrated report on the way in which paraprofessionals contribute to the improvement of human service practice in a variety of settings: health, education, social service, corrections and mental health; but the book does not include in its purview specific data or interpretations of work relations between professionals and paraprofessionals.

Two book-length collections of articles on the utilization of paraprofessionals in a variety of institutional settings (Frank Riessman and Arthur Pearl, New Careers for the Poor, New York: Free Press, 1965; and Frank Riessman and Hermine Popper, Up From Poverty, New York: Harper and Row, 1968) appeared in the late sixties, but they are more in the nature of prescriptive handbooks for practitioners. They point out the value of utilizing paraprofessionals, and describe programs and propose guidelines for practice but they are less concerned with scientific comparisons and theorizing about the empirical world of paraprofessionals. Even those papers which report actual research do not treat the issues with which we are concerned; for example, Up From Poverty focuses mainly on the instituting of career ladders for paraprofessionals. However, we are indebted to these works for raising questions which stimulated the direction of our own study and influenced our choice of themes.

In two brief pages of her article "Supervision and the Involvement of Paraprofessionals in Early Childhood Education" (in Robert H. Anderson and Harold G. Shane, eds., As the Twig is Bent: Readings in Early Childhood Education, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971, pp. 368-377), Frances Litman proposes a typology of professional-paraprofessional work relationships in early childhood education, which ranges from what she considers an obsolete, authoritarian "teacher-dominated" model, through a "teacher-leader" model, to an egalitarian "cooperative" model, the last of which is considered an emergent model, suitable for our times. We shall see below that it is the cooperative model which most closely fits the work relations between teachers and teacher aides in the Head Start centers studied.

Data Collection

Each staff member at each of four Head Start centers, all located in the New York metropolitan area, was interviewed at length on themes two to seven listed above. A subsample of paraprofessionals was interviewed for information about question eight and only professionals were queried about question one. A tape recorder was used in the interviews. The interviewing process comprised from one to six separate interviews lasting altogether from two to approximately eight hours. This constituted the major source of data and was the principal basis of description and explanation.

Observation of classrooms consisted usually in an unstructured observation, lasting half a day, in each of the classrooms at the centers. It was designed to elicit naturalistic data pertaining to child-adult and professional-paraprofessional interaction and was meant as a check--that is, confirming or disconfirming evidence--on self-reports of work relations elicited through interviews. Observation of sundry staff meetings was also carried out to yield behavioral data on the relations between professionals and paraprofessionals.

Data collection went on from February 1969 through August 1971. There were two cycles of data gathering to provide a diachronic dimension for our description of work relations: At "Time One" (February 1969 through August 1970) we applied the full-length version of our interview to all staff members and carried out observations of classrooms and staff meetings. For the second cycle of data collection, "Time Two," which occurred a year to a year and a half after Time One (September 1970 through August 1971), we gave a shortened version of our interview to all the staff members who had been interviewed at Time One and, in addition, gave the full scale version of the interview to new staff members at one center (Hull) which we wished to study in greater depth and breadth.

The interviewer and observer for the entire period of field work--the co-author of this study--was a white sociologist in her thirties who had had previous field work experience in several Head Start centers in the New York metropolitan area.

The second chapter of this report is devoted, first, to a description of the Head Start centers which were the objects of study, in terms of size, sponsorship, personnel characteristics, organization, regulations, program and in-service training; second, to tables reporting demographic characteristics of personnel interviewed. Part II presents findings on the teaching component of Head Start, center by center. The final chapter of Part II is comparative: It summarizes intercenter commonalities and variations in work relations between teachers and teacher aides. Part III presents findings on the social work component of Head Start, again center by center. The final chapter of Part III is again comparative: It summarizes the commonalities and variations among centers in work relations between social workers and social service aides. Part IV consists in a summary and interpretation of the findings and in the implications which the study has for practice and training. An appendix reports incidental findings concerning the meaning which work experience in Head Start has for the self-image and status of paraprofessionals, for their role as educational agents in the home, and for their further schooling.

PS 007198

CHAPTER 2

SECTION 1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE CENTERS

The four Head Start centers which were the sites of this study are located in the New York metropolitan area and had all been in continuous operation as full-year programs for at least three years at the time of our first contact with them.

All Head Start centers are sponsored by a delegate agency, which is authorized by and responsible to the city Head Start office. The delegate agency receives and disburses federal funds, hires center directors and staff and supervises all staff. It may be responsible for one or several Head Start centers. The delegate agency may be an old established settlement house, a church, the Board of Education, a newly-founded community action agency, or an independent organization formed for the sole purpose of sponsoring one or more Head Start centers.

All New York City centers are regulated by New York City Head Start and, through it, by the requirements and guidelines of the federal Head Start program. The national program is at present located in the Office of Child Development, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.[1] In addition to the federal and city Head Start organizations, there are state and regional Head Start offices which, at least for the centers in our study, seemed to have relatively little impact on the daily life of the centers.

Federal guidelines require all centers to have programs for parents as well as children, a requirement which is reflected in the division of program and staff into teaching and social service components. One of the chief distinctions of Head Start is that, unlike other educational organizations, it has a social service program whose goal is to develop and maintain parent involvement in center activities and to work with the families in the tradition of social work.

---

[1] The centers must also conform to local health, safety and staffing regulations which are the responsibility of agencies outside the Head Start bureaucracy.

Teaching

Staff. The guidelines set a ratio of at least two teaching staff members for every fifteen children and, by and large, the four centers in our study observed this guideline. One of the two staff persons in the classroom must be a teacher who meets local certification requirements, who is, in other words, the professional. The professional usually has a college degree and has undergone teacher training. The second adult in the classroom is the teacher aide, an "indigenous nonprofessional" or paraprofessional who does not have a college degree, is often a member of the client population and usually lives in the neighborhood. In the study centers, the teaching staff was often supplemented by parent and community volunteers and, during the summer, by Youth Corps and Urban Corps members in their teens and early twenties. The volunteers, the teacher aides, and all other classroom personnel were under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher. The teaching staff as a whole was supervised by an education director whose office was usually, though not always, located in the center under her supervision. The responsibilities of the education director varied. At three of our centers, the education director was also the center director. Further, depending on the structural organization and size of the delegate agency, the education director might be directly responsible to a director of all centers sponsored by a given delegate agency.

Program. The program for the children included indoor and outdoor activities. The classrooms were equipped with kitchen and housekeeping areas, doll and dress-up corners, sand and water-play facilities and a variety of materials including blocks, puzzles, games, etc. In addition to individual activity, there were group activities, such as singing and discussion. Some formal academic work was also part of the program and consisted of first steps in arithmetic, reading and writing. In addition, the children took short trips, such as walks and visits in the neighborhood and bus excursions.

The teachers and centers varied in their emphasis on different activities, as well as in how they introduced and implemented them. For example, one teacher might use verbal drill in the teaching of numbers and letters, while another would use lotto games, and letter, number and figure recognition games.

In addition to their responsibilities in the classroom, the teacher, and sometimes the teacher aide, attended meetings of the parent classroom committees.

Social Service

Staff. The social service staff in the study centers (and in most of the Head Start centers in metropolitan New York) consists of a social service director (often called the social worker) who is the professional, that is, who has a Master of Social Work degree, and who acts as the director of social services in the center. The social service director has a staff consisting of family assistants and family workers who have no formal social work training or credentials and constitute the paraprofessionals in the social service component. The background of social service paraprofessionals is similar to that of the teacher aides. The distinction between family assistant and family worker is that the former position is conceived as carrying with it more responsibility and skills (usually acquired through experience as a family worker) and thus a higher salary. The existence of these two levels gives a social service paraprofessional the opportunity to move upward without academic credentials--an opportunity not available to teacher aides.

The social workers, like the education directors, may or may not be based at the center whose social service program they direct. Furthermore, the social worker may be responsible to the education director if the latter is also the center director, or may be responsible to a social service director at the delegate agency who supervises all social workers in the centers sponsored by the agency. The social worker, then, usually supervises only paraprofessionals, whereas the education director supervises both professionals (classroom teachers) and paraprofessionals (teacher aides).

Program. The social service program included recruiting parents to enroll their children in the center, guiding the organized program of parent activities, listening to parents' personal problems and making referrals and occasionally counseling the parents, and facilitating and mediating negotiations between parents and various government bureaucracies, particularly housing and welfare. In addition, they followed up on children who were absent or who dropped out, visited children's homes, escorted children to and from school in emergencies, did babysitting during parent meetings and daytime emergencies, and escorted groups of children to medical and dental clinics on a regular basis and kept records of such visits.

The pivotal activities of the program for parents were regularly scheduled parent meetings at which issues were aired and subsidiary parent programs were planned and launched. The parents (who, with rare exceptions, were the mothers) of each classroom in all the study centers met separately as "classroom committees." Each committee elected a representative to the Policy Advisory Committee which, by federal guidelines, is the governing body at each center and is responsible for setting up committees on program, finance, personnel, and grievance. The social service staff worked with each of these committees and also helped to implement the various programs planned by the parents, which included cultural, recreational, and fund-raising activities. Together with teaching staff, they also helped plan and carry out parties and trips for the children. Family workers were assigned to individual classroom committees, while the family assistant usually had overall responsibility for these groups and worked closely with the Policy Advisory Committee.

Other Services

Each center had food aides (cooks) and custodial workers, and in two of the study centers there was a "toddlers' room," used mostly by the younger siblings of participating children and staffed by paraprofessionals. An additional special service was provided by the presence of a part-time psychologist, psychiatrist or child therapist, who worked with staff, parents and children.

Staff Training Programs

There were inservice training programs for professional and paraprofessional staff at all the study centers. Two of the centers directed their own programs; the program at the other two centers was managed by the central administrative offices of the delegate agencies. Sessions were conducted by the education directors, social service directors, and sometimes by the psychologists and outside resource persons. Usually the teaching and social service staffs attended separate sessions.

New York University had a training program for paraprofessional staff in Head Start centers and many of the paraprofessionals in the four centers had participated in it. The program required full-time attendance for five weeks and there were separate and combined sessions for teaching and social service staffs. At the end of the five weeks, the professional supervisors of the participants attended sessions with the paraprofessionals and other sessions for the supervisors only.

NYU also had a program of undergraduate studies specially designed for the paraprofessionals from Head Start centers and other work settings. Some of the paraprofessionals at the four study centers had passed the entrance examination to this program and were studying for bachelor's degrees on a part-time basis.

According to federal Head Start policy, they were released from their work when their class schedules required it.

Williams

Williams was one of several centers sponsored by the community service division of a large church organization. The center was housed in a church in the central business area of a large, predominantly black community, a few blocks away from the administrative offices of the delegate agency. The church is a three-story building, well kept up, but in a side street of deteriorated tenements and abandoned buildings.

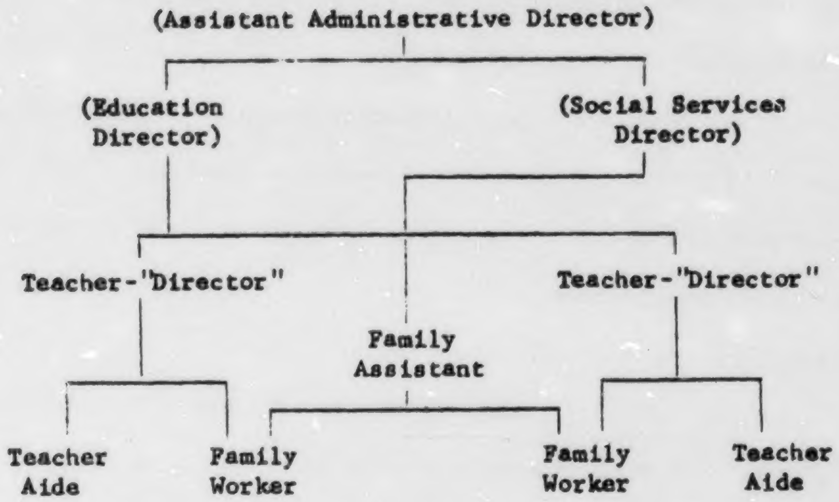
Williams center consisted of two adjoining classrooms on the second floor of the church. The rooms were large, sun-filled, and cheerful. A large, rather cheerless, meeting room and the kitchen were in the basement. The social service staff used one corner of the meeting room as an office; they also used a desk in one of the classrooms and kept some files in both classrooms.

The chart below presents the basic organizational structure of the center.

Most children attending this center were black; a small minority were of Puerto Rican origin. As can be seen, the teaching staff consisted of one teacher-director and one teacher aide in each of the two classrooms. The social service staff was composed of one family assistant serving both classrooms and two family workers, each serving one classroom. The food aide and the church custodian completed the staff roster. The center staff was supervised from the delegate agency's central office by the education director and the social services director; and overall by the assistant administrative director, who carried most of the responsibility for the operation of the agency's centers.

A psychologist employed part-time served all the centers. The social

WILLIAMS CENTER



a.m. session-15 children
p.m. session-15 children

all-day session
25 children

Food Aide
Church Custodian

Note: Persons in parentheses are off-site services director had a paraprofessional assistant and, by the time of our second period of contact with the center, a professional assistant who had a B.A. degree and experience in teaching and social service work. These two assistants had major responsibilities in administrative and program activities but very few supervisory responsibilities.

The education and social services directors and the psychologist held separate inservice training sessions for the teaching and social service staffs. Monthly business meetings of the combined staffs of three centers were conducted by the assistant administrative director. These meetings, and the inservice training sessions and occasional all-center staff meetings, brought the Williams staff into contact with the staffs of the other centers of the delegate agency.

The staffs of each of the two classrooms at Williams were supposed to have weekly meetings with their respective teacher-directors. However, the staffs usually discussed matters informally at odd moments as they occurred or needed to be considered, instead of in a formal meeting.

On the whole, the children's programs were separate to each classroom, although bus excursions and shorter trips were taken together as were visits to a nearby playground. Some parties, such as those held at Christmas and Halloween, and functions such as graduation and open house, were also held jointly.

The director of social services placed great emphasis on the medical program for the children and carrying it out was a major responsibility of the social service staff at Williams. Their other responsibilities were as we have already described them. Parent meetings were held separately by classroom, but many of the activities were carried on jointly, such as bus excursions and fund-raising ventures.

There was regular contact between the teaching and social service staffs within and between each classroom. This was facilitated perhaps by the small size of the center, the physical arrangement of the classrooms, and the presence of social service staff's work areas in the classrooms. The formally arranged contact of the weekly classroom staff meetings was of minor importance in contrast to various relatively informal contacts. Examples of the latter were having lunch together with the children and waiting together after the day's program for late parents to pick up their children. In addition, the social service staff assisted in the classrooms during emergencies and sometimes when the teacher or teacher aide was taking a break. These shared classroom responsibilities gave the social service staff more contacts with the children than the staff at the other centers generally had.

The three directors in the central office of the delegate agency felt that they had adequate knowledge about the work performance and work habits of the staff at Williams, despite their physical separation from it. But these directors also felt very keenly the pressure of having to supervise a staff that was not only large, but scattered in several different locations. They had a deep concern for the further development of both professional and paraprofessional staffs and, in addition, the assistant administrative director was constantly trying to make the operation of the centers more efficient and more economical.

Hull

Hull center was sponsored by an old and highly respected settlement house which had many varied programs for people of all ages. The center classrooms were situated in a single-story building in a large, low-income housing development of high-rise buildings. The settlement house was a two-story building next door. Both buildings faced on to open spaces and playgrounds. Hull's facilities were spread over the two buildings: three classrooms, the kitchen and a small open lounge area used by the teaching staff were in the single-story building; the office, family room and toddlers' room were in the settlement house building. The office, which was small, accommodated the center director, the secretary and the social service staff. The classrooms, except for one which was comparatively small, and the parent room were spacious, bright and attractive. All the classrooms were especially well-equipped.

As can be seen from the table of organization (see below), the director of this center was also the education director and the social services director was the social worker for the center. Both these people had their offices on site. The social services director supervised one family assistant and two part-time family workers. A third part-time family worker, supervised by the education director, was in charge of the toddlers' room.

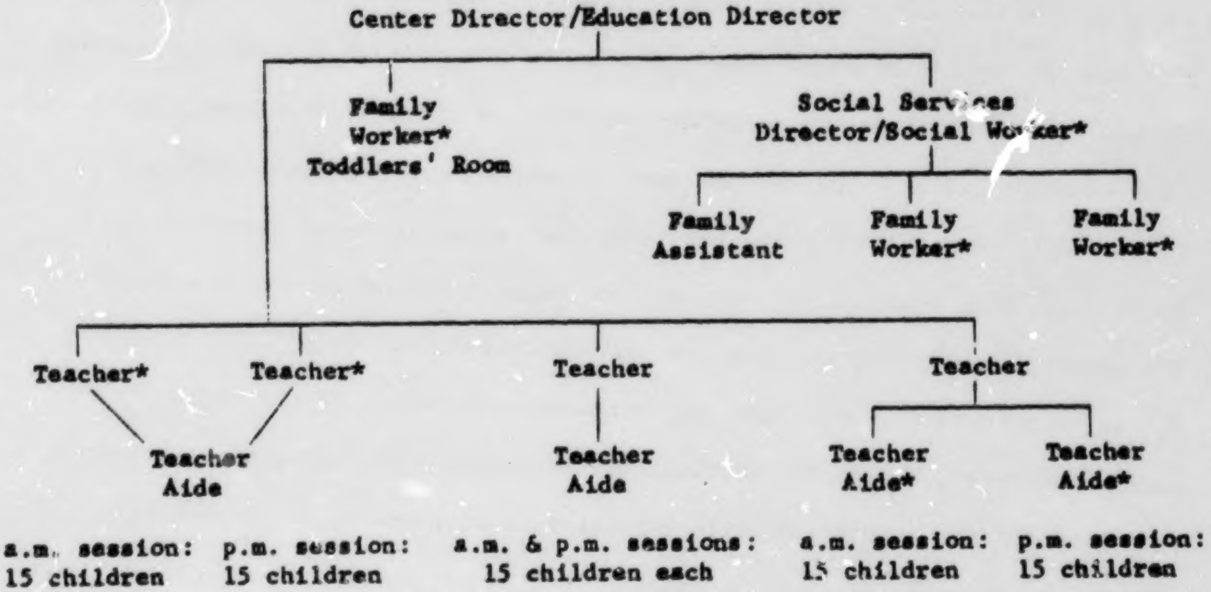
The three classrooms each had morning and afternoon sessions. Each session consisted of 15 children, one aide and one teacher.

At the time of our first contact with Hull center, it had an enrollment of 90 children (15 children in each of six half-day sessions). Reflecting the ethnic composition of the neighborhood they represented several groups, of which the largest was white. The parents of a small proportion of the white children had recently arrived from other countries. The other ethnic groups were black, Puerto Rican and other Latin American, East Indian and Chinese. The children came from both low- and middle-income families since the center accepted children from middle-income families who paid tuition.

A child therapist worked at the center part-time, and a consulting psychiatrist came one-half day per week. In addition, there was a part-time secretary, a food aide, a part-time food aide assistant and part-time custodian.

Several staff changes occurred between our first and second contact with Hull. Two teacher aides were added, one to each of two classrooms because the size of the classes increased. In addition, the status of one of the teacher aides was changed so that she worked as a teacher for half the day and as an

HULL CENTER


Center Director/Education Director
Family Worker*
Toddlers' Room
Social Services Director/Social Worker*
Family Assistant
Family Worker*
Family Worker*
Teacher*
Teacher*
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher Aide
Teacher Aide
Teacher Aide*
Teacher Aide*
a.m. session: 15 children
p.m. session: 15 children
a.m. & p.m. sessions: 15 children each
a.m. session: 15 children
p.m. session: 15 children

Secretary*
Food Aide
Food Aide Assistant*
Custodian*

*These persons work part-time.

aide for the other half. The principal change in the social service staff was that at the time of our last contact there was no longer a social worker. Her functions were assumed by the center director and by a social worker on the staff of the settlement house. Other changes in the social service staff were that one of the family workers was promoted to the position of family assistant because the original family assistant had left the center. The remaining family worker had left and two new family workers were therefore hired.

At Hull the social worker, and later the center director, conducted in-service training sessions and business meetings of the social service staff. The center director did the same for the education staff in addition to conducting a monthly all-staff meeting, orientation meetings at the beginning of each school year, and weekly meetings of the teaching staffs of each classroom. From time to time outside resource persons were utilized at staff meetings.

The responsibilities of the teaching and social service staffs were like those previously described, but the two staffs did not have as much contact with each other as did those at Williams. Principal differences in programs and responsibilities between the two centers were in the social service sphere. At Hull not as much time was spent on the children's medical program as at Williams.[1] Further, the existence of the "family room" for parents at Hull meant that a staff person was assigned to welcome parents, make coffee, and be generally available to the parents.

The educational staff carried out one responsibility that was not part of the tasks of the staff at Williams: the teacher and the teacher aide together visited the homes of newly enrolled children at the beginning of the school year. Time was especially set aside for this purpose.

---

[1] The assignment of one of the family workers to work solely on the children's medical program came toward the end of our contact with Hull.

In contrast to Williams, where the administrators were physically separated from the center, at Hull the directors were on the premises. The center director-education director was a former nursery school teacher and director with many years' experience in the settlement house which sponsored the center. In addition to being closely involved in every phase of the planning and carrying out of the program and in the varied activities for both children and adults, she spent time in each of the three classrooms almost every day. She was a vigorous presence with an unflagging concern for each child. She was indifferent to status distinctions between professional and paraprofessional staff. It is perhaps relevant to note that this was the only center of the four at which the paraprofessional teachers were called assistant teachers. The supervisory role of the social worker was far less vigorously exercised than that of the center director. This appeared to be partly a consequence of her part-time status and of her newness to the position and the center. She had been working there for less than a year at the time of our first contact.

Hull did not give the impression of being a well-oiled, smoothly running operation; but one in which the going was rough at times, in which new practices and policies were often introduced, current ones modified or abandoned. The atmosphere at this center was one of intense, purposeful activity.

Adams

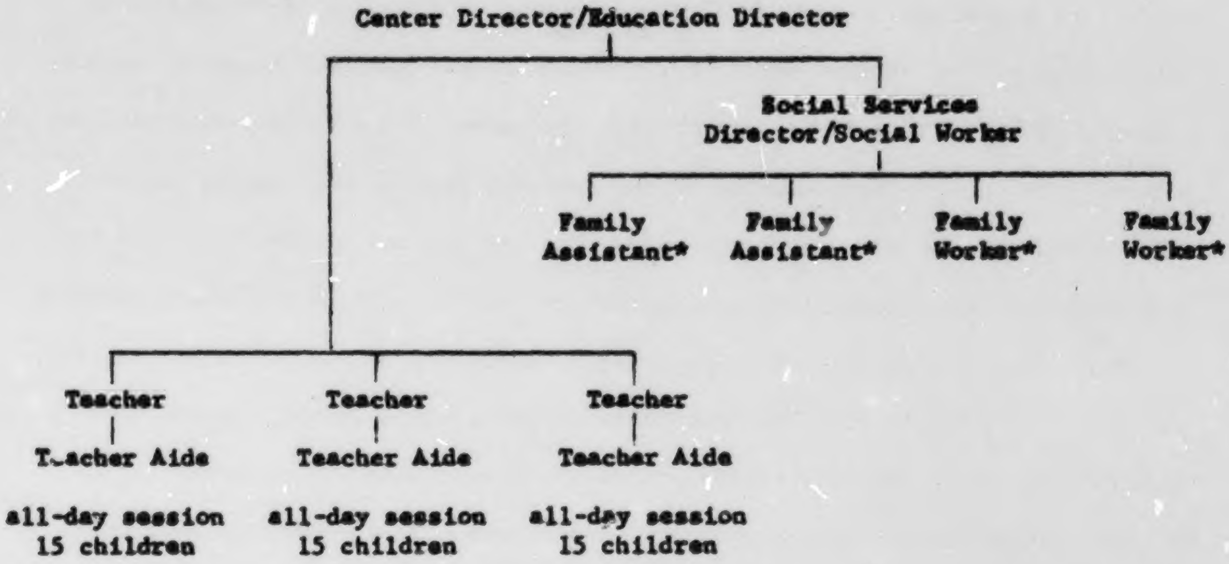
Adams center was sponsored by an old, well-established settlement house which was located in a high-income, predominantly white neighborhood. The six-story settlement house building, which also housed the center, was old but well kept up. It was situated on a block of small and large apartment houses, with largely upper-middle-income rental rates. Nevertheless, there were residual pockets of poverty in the area and it is from these pockets that the center drew its client population.

Adams' three classrooms and its other main facilities occupied the fourth floor of the settlement house building. The other facilities consisted of the kitchen, a family room, a small office for the director and the secretary, and a smaller office occupied by the social worker. The paraprofessional social service staff used the family room as their work area. The center staff and parents also used rooms on other floors for meetings, and the children regularly used a rooftop play area and a gym. Two of the classrooms were large and sunny. The third was comparatively small and not as bright as the others. All three were cheerful and inviting.

The center had an enrollment of 45 children, 15 in each classroom, who attended the center from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Most of the children were white, with a minority from East Indian, Oriental, black, Puerto Rican and Latin American families. As was true of Hull, a few of the white children were from families who were recent immigrants.

As can be seen from the organizational table (see below), the director of the center, who was also the education director, directly supervised only the teaching staff. There were three teachers and three teacher aides on this staff. The social service staff consisted of the director of social services, who supervised the two part-time family assistants and two part-time family workers. In contrast to other staff, the social service staff were all new to their jobs at the time of our first contact with this center. There was also a paraprofessional worker who supervised the toddlers' room, a full-time secretary, food aide, part-time food aide assistant, a part-time consulting psychologist and two parents who substituted in the classrooms as paraprofessional assistants. The custodians were employees of the settlement house, supervised by its staff. It should be noted that a mandated policy of the center's previous

ADAMS CENTER


Center Director/Education Director
Social Services Director/Social Worker
Family Assistant*
Family Assistant*
Family Worker*
Family Worker*
Teacher
Teacher Aide
all-day session 15 children
Teacher
Teacher Aide
all-day session 15 children
Teacher
Teacher Aide
all-day session 15 children

Paraprofessional (Toddlers' Room)
Secretary
Food Aide
Food Aide Assistant*

*These persons work part-time.

sponsor (before Head Start) had required that all the teacher aides be young men and the Head Start parents had chosen to continue this policy.

Weekly meetings of the social service and teaching staffs were held separately, but not always regularly. These meetings were mainly of an inservice training nature, conducted respectively by the social services director and the center director. Once during our contact with Adams the psychologist conducted a discussion and training session of the combined staffs, but usually she did this weekly for the teaching staff only. The teacher and teacher aide in each classroom met very informally, in contrast to, for example, a set weekly meeting. Whenever something came up that they wished to discuss it was done, for example, during the children's long rest period or in the morning before the children arrived. Business meetings of the entire staff were scheduled monthly but it was not always possible to adhere to this schedule. These meetings were conducted by the center director.

The programs and staff responsibilities varied little from those described previously. As at Hull, and in contrast to Williams, the teacher and teacher aide pairs from each classroom at Adams visited the children's homes. They tried to visit each child, and their visits were dispersed throughout the early months of the school year. The responsibilities of the social service staff did not include much involvement in medical and dental contacts and appointments for the children; nor were home visits a major part of their responsibilities. The heaviest involvement, for the family workers especially, was in the family room.

Some of the mothers visited the family room very often and it was therefore an almost constant social and activity center where, for example, sewing, knitting and typing classes were held, paper work involved in the parent program (e.g., minutes of meetings and financial records) was worked on by parents and staff, and for a while the social worker held weekly family-life discussions in this room. She was always available to, and constantly sought out by, parents; there were many informal contacts between her and the mothers in the family room. In addition, the center director, the secretary, and some members of the teaching staff sometimes spent their breaks in the family room. The parents' room thus also served as a place where staff and parents mingled in a relatively unstructured and social way that did not occur at the other centers.

In contrast to Williams and Hull, Adams center was characterized by a formally vested authority in two offices. As at Hull, the center director was the person formally responsible for the center to the director of the settlement house and to the city administration of Head Start. Consequently, she had the largest share of contacts with the offices of these two sponsors. In contrast to the situation at Hull, the director of social services at Adams had worked at the center more than a year longer than the center director, and she bore responsibilities and was informally recognized by staff and parents as an authority in the center beyond the formal bounds of her position, which was technically under the authority of the center director.

Jefferson

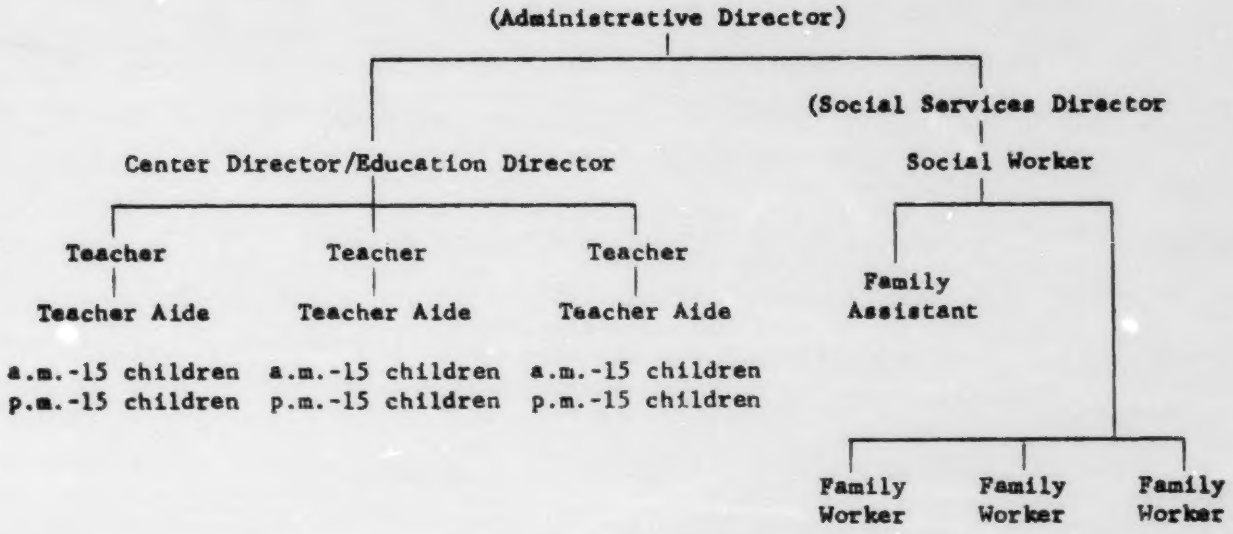
Jefferson was one of several centers sponsored by the Head Start division of a community action agency organized in the vanguard days of the "War on Poverty," shortly before the first Head Start centers were established. The center was located in a low-income housing development a few blocks from the administrative office of the delegate agency, which was in a middle-income housing development. Both center and delegate agency were in a predominantly black community. The low-income development was made up of high-rise buildings situated around a pretty central open area of trees and grass dotted with benches and some play equipment for children.

Jefferson had three classrooms in the basement level of one of the apartment buildings. The classrooms were bright and cheerful. In contrast, the concrete floors, unadorned walls and artificial brightness of the entry area and corridor gave a somewhat stark, drab appearance. The office, a large meeting room and a small kitchen were located between the classrooms. The education director and the social service staff shared the office. Although the room was large, the quarters were cramped because of the number of people using it; there was also no privacy for them.

There were 90 children in attendance at Jefferson, most of whom were black and a few of whom were Puerto Rican. There were separate morning and afternoon sessions in each classroom.

As the table of organization shows, the education director, though theoretically responsible for the entire center, directly supervised all of the staff except the social service people. The teaching staff consisted of three teachers and three teacher aides, a pair serving in each classroom. The social worker supervised the one family assistant and three family workers. The education director was responsible to the administrative director of the delegate agency, while the social worker was supervised by the director of social services at the delegate agency. Also on the center staff were two food aides and a full-time custodian. A part-time psychologist had been assigned to the center by the administrative office at the beginning of our contact with Jefferson. However, she did not become active, left the agency after a short time and was not replaced. Between our first and second periods of contact with Jefferson, the social worker left and was replaced. Before we returned for the second time, this social worker too had left, to be succeeded by a third. At this center, although all the social workers were college graduates, only the social service director had the MSW degree.

JEFFERSON CENTER



Two Food Aides
Custodian

Note: Persons in parentheses are off-site.

Jefferson had weekly all-staff business meetings conducted by the center director. During the period of our contact with the center, there were no formal separate meetings of the social service or the teaching staffs, nor were there meetings of the separate classroom staffs, except on a casual basis. The entire staff of the center attended a monthly meeting attended by the staffs of all the centers sponsored by the delegate agency. This almost day-long meeting was conducted by the director of all the agency centers and included on its agenda both business and inservice training topics. There was also time for informal socializing. A committee composed of professional and paraprofessional members of the staffs of different centers planned the program for these meetings. Other committees, similarly constituted, carried out other activities generated at the meetings, such as investigating educational and career opportunities and planning annual events.

Separate inservice training sessions were held for the teaching and social service staffs at Jefferson, but during the period of our work at the center the program for the teaching staff was being reorganized and no sessions for them were held. However, the education directors of the several centers of the delegate agency were meeting during that time, in part to plan and organize a new program. Both social workers and social service workers from all the centers met together for weekly three-hour long inservice training sessions conducted by the director of social services and sometimes supplemented by outside speakers. The social workers also met separately with the delegate agency's director of social services. Once during the time we were at Jefferson, its staff and the entire staff of two other centers met for two days of sensitivity training sessions conducted by outside resource persons.

The program for children and parents followed the general pattern described earlier. The medical program for children was similar to that of Williams in requiring considerable staff time, from the family workers in particular. Home visiting was stressed by the social services director and this activity occupied more of the family workers' time at Jefferson than it did for the family workers at the other centers. On the other hand, the family workers at Jefferson were less involved in the program for parents than were their counterparts at the other centers. The family assistant bore most of the responsibility for the parent activities at Jefferson.

The center director was a strong and motherly presence at Jefferson, as was the family assistant. The work relationship they had developed with each other seemed to be highly compatible and to have welded them together into an administrative team quite independent of the administration and supervision of the directors of the delegate agency. The center director had been at the center since its beginning and had had many years' experience with preschool children. She and the family assistant had been working together for several years and gave the impression of being very self-confident and proud of their work and of the center.

The center director was informal but correct and firm in her relations with the staff. This was accompanied by a friendly informality between most of the staff members. For example, during the hour-long lunch break when there were no children in the center, some of the paraprofessional staff, including the food aides and the custodian, would have lunch with the different teaching staffs in their classrooms. The social service staff and the center director often ate lunch together in the office.

Jefferson was characterized by a tight unity among its staff. Several of its members referred to the center as unique compared to the other centers sponsored by its delegate agency. One of the qualities they stressed was the loyalty of the staff members to each other.

SECTION 2. SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED

Table 1

Selected Demographic Characteristics of Teaching Staffs: Time I and Time II

	Total		Williams		Bull		Adams		Jefferson	
	I	II	I	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
TEACHERS										
Sex:										
Male	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Female	12	7	2	2	4	3	3	-	3	2
Total	12	8	2	2	4	3	3	1	3	2
Age:										
20-29	6	3	1	1	2	1	3	1	-	-
30-39	3	2	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	-
40-49	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
50-55	2	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
Total	12	8	2	2	4	3	3	1	3	2
Ethnicity:										
Black	5	4	1	1	1	1	-	-	3	2
Puerto Rican and other Spanish	4	1	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-
White	3	3	-	-	-	2	3	1	-	-
Total	12	8	2	2	4	3	3	1	3	2
Education:										
Some College	1	3	-	-	1	2	-	1	-	-
B.A. Degree	11	5	2	2	3	1	3	-	3	2
Total	12	8	2	2	4	3	3	1	3	2
TEACHER AIDES										
Sex:										
Male	3	1	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-
Female	8	8	2	1	3	4	-	-	3	3
Total	11	9	2	1	3	4	3	1	3	3
Age:										
20-29	7	5	1	1	2	3	3	1	1	-
30-39	2	2	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	1
40-49	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
50-55	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Total	11	9	2	1	3	4	3	1	3	3
Ethnicity:										
Black	9	4	2	1	1	-	3	-	3	3
Puerto Rican and other Spanish	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
White	1	4	-	-	1	3	-	1	-	-
Total	11	9	2	1	3	4	3	1	3	3
Education:										
High School: non-graduate	5	4	2	1	1	1	-	-	2	2
High School graduate	2	3	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	1
Some College	4	2	-	-	2	1	2	1	-	-
Total	11	9	2	1	3	4	3	1	3	3

Table 2

Selected Demographic Characteristics of Social Service Staffs: Time I and Time II

	Total		Williams		Hull		Adams		Jefferson	
	I	II	I	II	I	II	I	II	I	II
SOCIAL WORKERS										
Sex:										
Male	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Female	5	4	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	-
Total	5	5	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
Age:										
20-29	2	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
30-39	1	2	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
40-49	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
50-55	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	5	5	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
Ethnicity:										
Black	3	3	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1
Puerto Rican and other Spanish	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
White	2	2	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	-
Total	5	5	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
Education:										
B.A. Degree	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
MSW	4	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	5	5	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
SOCIAL SERVICE AIDES										
Sex:										
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Female	14	12	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3
Total	14	12	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3
Age:										
20-29	5	4	1	-	1	2	3	2	-	-
30-39	3	5	1	1	-	1	1	2	1	1
40-49	3	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-
50-55	3	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	2
Total	14	12	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3
Ethnicity:										
Black	10	7	3	2	1	-	2	2	4	3
Puerto Rican and other Spanish	2	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
White	2	4	-	-	-	2	2	2	-	-
Total	14	12	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3
Education:										
High School: non-graduate	3*	3	2	1	-	2	-	-	1	-
High School graduate	4	4	1	1	-	-	2	2	1	1
Vocational training post High School	2	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-
Some College	4	3	-	-	2	1	-	-	2	2
B.S. Degree	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Total	14	12	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3

*Included in this group is a social service aide at Jefferson who had had no high school education.

Table 3

Selected Demographic Characteristics of Administrators and Psychologists Interviewed: Time I and Time II

	Total	Williams	Hull	Adams*	Jefferson
ADMINISTRATORS					
Sex:					
Male	-	-	-	-	-
Female	6	2	1	1	2
Total	6	2	1	1	2
Age:					
30-39	3	2	-	-	1
40-49	2	-	1	1	-
50-55	1	-	-	-	1
Total	6	2	1	1	2
Ethnicity:					
Black	4	2	-	-	2
Puerto Rican and other Spanish	-	-	-	-	-
White	2	-	1	1	-
Total	6	2	1	1	2
Education:					
Some College	1	1	-	-	-
B.A.	1	-	-	-	1
M.A.	4	1	1	1	1
Ph.D.	-	-	-	-	-
Total	6	2	1	1	2
PSYCHOLOGISTS					
Sex:					
Male	1	1	-	-	-
Female	2	-	1	1**	-
Total	3	1	1	1	-
Age:					
30-39	-	-	-	-	-
40-49	2	-	1	1	-
50-55	1	1	-	-	-
Total	3	1	1	1	-
Ethnicity:					
Black	-	-	-	-	-
Puerto Rican and other Spanish	-	-	-	-	-
White	3	1	1	1	-
Total	3	1	1	1	-
Education:					
Some College	-	-	-	-	-
B.A.	-	-	-	-	-
M.A.	2	-	1	1	-
Ph.D.	1	1	-	-	-
Total	3	1	1	1	-

*At Time II, the director of Adams had left and was replaced by the person categorized as social worker at Time I (see Table 1).

**This psychologist left and was not replaced at Time II.

PART II

WORK RELATIONS BETWEEN TEACHERS AND TEACHER AIDES AT TIME ONE AND TIME TWO

CHAPTER 3

WILLIAMS CENTER

TIME ONE

Chart of Statuses and Persons
(Initials are Fictitious)

Teacher	Aide
BT	SC
EW	KU

Attitudes toward the Employment of Paraprofessionals

The main rationale which the teachers at this center give for the employment of teacher aides is the absolutely indispensable role which the latter play in helping to manage a class of children whose size is beyond the managing capacity of one person. As one teacher put it, "With 22 children I need an assistant teacher. There's no getting around that question." An assistant is thus indispensable in helping the teacher run a class of 15 or more children, some of whom are barely beyond the stage of infancy.

It is further hypothesized by these teachers that the presence of two adults in the classroom has beneficial effects on the children: different class activities can be initiated and supervised catering to different child interests; the class can be divided into groups for academic instruction--for instance, fast and slow groups, each getting the appropriate instruction; closer relations with children can be developed, since two persons have more time to spend individually with children; finally, the children interact with two adults, between whom they may choose, according to their predilections, to secure nurturance and guidance.

Teachers further indicate that indigenous paraprofessionals who are also parents are well suited for assistant positions because of the following assumptions about paraprofessionals: (1) they have acquired personal experience in child-rearing which leads to their competence in the management of children in the classroom; and (2) due to indigenous residence in the community where the center is located they know the social and personal background of children and, by passing this information on to teachers, can help them acquire a better understanding of the children.

Role Allocation

The following kinds of functions can be extracted from the daily flow of work performed by teachers and their aides: planning and reviewing of the day's activities; creating a learning environment; management of children (e.g., supervision during play and story telling, discipline, etc.); formal instruction; paperwork (record writing); "housekeeping": cleaning up, putting materials back on shelves, setting table for meals, toileting of children; and overall direction of the classroom ("setting tone," announcing transitions).

It is clear that planning is a joint activity. Teacher and aide sit down every day to plan what activities shall be initiated that day. They also engage in consultation at the end of the day to talk about "how it came out" or "why it went wrong."

Teacher and aide together set up the classroom and lay out toys and games at the beginning of the morning and of the afternoon, or they take turns at doing this.

Teacher and aide take turns at managing the class. One teacher put it in this fashion: Sometimes she feels "lazy" and the assistant takes over, or vice versa. The decision as to who will manage is implicit, based on "sensing each other's feelings." But management may be a more time-consuming activity for the assistant because she sees to it that children behave when the teacher gives lessons or leads in singing or story telling and she supervises free play when the teacher is working on her reports.

The formal teaching of academic skills (colors, numbers, alphabet) is usually within the teacher's province, although teachers state that aides would, on the basis of their observation of what the teacher does, be able to teach academic skills and do so when the teacher is absent. However, it is stated that only one person, the teacher, should direct instructional activities, although occasionally the aide may work with a small group on the alphabet, for example.

The teacher ordinarily reserves for herself all paperwork (keeping attendance and filling out records), that is, all work having to do with the handling of symbols, whereas activities involving interpersonal relations are, as we have seen, more evenly shared by teacher and aide. One teacher, EW, explains that her aide would know what to record on a child but "wouldn't be able to write it down." The other teacher, BT, claims that her aide has the competence to record, but does not enjoy writing. We shall see that, in the first case, the unwillingness of the teacher in letting her aide collaborate with her in this activity was a major source of conflict in their relationship.

It is in the area of housekeeping that the egalitarian ideology of the teacher with respect to her relationship to her assistant is most clearly expressed. Teachers say that there is nothing teachers ought not do or relegate to their aides. Thus one teacher, BT, says that she has not been freed from tasks she ought not to do as a professional: "We do the same things, we both wipe tables..." In the case of the other teacher, EW, either the teacher or the aide supervises the toileting of children prior to lunch, while the other sets the table. In this case, teacher and aide take turns at cleaning the room, one doing it in the morning and the other in the afternoon, while they may do it jointly between the morning and afternoon sessions. Despite the joint involvement in menial work, still the teacher shows her concern with egalitarianism and her fear of not doing a fair share of menial work when she states that she first felt guilty about letting the aide clean up by herself in the afternoon. She states in no ambiguous terms: "Professionals should do everything."

Teacher aides also perceive this area as one of joint participation: "Whoever sees that something has to be cleaned, does it....If you want to, you can; if you don't, leave it."

The initiative for overall guidance of what takes place in the classroom is exercised by the teacher. She sets the tone and controls the flow of activity for the day; she announces transitions between activities. However, when no overall class activity is taking place (such as singing, story telling), the teacher gives freedom to the aide to guide small-group activities and work with individual children. The aide is responsible for the activities she initiates and the teacher does not directly supervise her.

It is evident from this review of the allocation of roles between teacher and aide that there is very little specialization, and that the teacher allocates to herself alone very few functions (mainly overall direction of the classroom and paperwork). She takes pride in performing all the functions involved in the responsibility for a class of children.

The flexible division of labor is particularly manifest in the ad hoc nature of role allocation. Teacher and aide, on the basis of personal preference or mood, decide on what each will do. Thus the aide, SC, does not like to read stories, so she allocates that role activity to herself only when the teacher is absent. And her teacher, BT, is perfectly agreeable to this decision: "We respect one another's preferences." As we saw above, who will perform classroom management activities also depends somewhat on personal feelings of the moment, which may not even be overtly communicated.

These observations on the structuring of roles and the apprenticeship served by the aide in numerous activities make comprehensible the facility with which the aide could "fill the professional's shoes," that is, take over the class when the teacher is absent.

A clear case for the role of the aide as a co-teacher or surrogate teacher is made by BT: "Paraprofessionals ought not to be used for sharpening pencils and taking attendance. They are adults...they are sensitive to children's needs as much as the professionals...they can reach children as well as professionals." BT finally ends her case for the full involvement of paraprofessionals in teaching with the remark that "A good paraprofessional is superior to a bad teacher."

How far professionals have come in sharing tasks with paraprofessionals is evident from the education director's assessment of the utilization of paraprofessionals when Head Start began two years prior to our field work at the center: "I think that what I found most that disturbed me (when I first came on the job) ...were the ways in which the aides were utilized in the classroom. I didn't feel that those aides were being utilized to their fullest potential. They could do much more. I was met by teachers saying, well there isn't enough time in the day to do this...and these were things that I felt the aides...could with a little time be trained to do...because the aides weren't getting enough from the teachers...to make it a purposeful experience for them."

Socialization into Work Role

At Williams center, because the administrative staff performed no orientation function for new teachers and the assistants had seniority when teachers first came on the job, it devolved, by default, upon the assistants to induct teachers into their roles.

Thus, BT asked SC to tell her about the functioning of the center and at the beginning leaned on her: "I wanted her to be the teacher and me the assistant." BT also relied upon SC to manage the children and handle behavior problems. After a few weeks she acquired control of the classroom and assumed responsibility for overall direction.

The other teacher, EW, confessed to feeling like an "outsider" when she first came. She let KU direct the class on the basis of the schedule which the previous teacher and KU had devised. Thus, KU "told me what to do," which led to some resentment on EW's part. The devolution of leadership onto her aide was rationalized on two bases: (1) management: KU is a parent, so she "understands" children; (2) instruction: KU "has been around several teachers," so she has gotten ideas as to what a good program should be like. The aide was thus used as a model of proper teacher behavior and as a reference person: In the first few weeks EW asked herself: "Am I doing this right? Is KU comparing me with the previous teacher?"

The teachers at this center resented the almost total lack of supervision and guidance by the administrative staff. The education director "was seldom around." The teachers did not know whether they "were doing right or wrong." They were not informed as to what their goals for the children should be or what approaches to take to reach these goals. They wanted "concrete ideas" for programs and these were not forthcoming. The education director's attitude was perceived by one teacher as: "You're the teacher...you decide...!" When guidance was offered, it was inconsistent: Thus the education director "emphasized free learning one moment, structured skills the next." The lack of direction was so demoralizing that one teacher perceived it as a possible reason for teacher turnover.

The same laissez-faire kind of supervision exercised by the education director also characterized the teacher-teacher aide relationship. One teacher, BT, denies the very fact of supervision: "The idea of being a supervisor doesn't exist." Rather than supervision, there is mutual consultation: at the beginning of the day, during the rest period and at the end of the day, as well as at weekly meetings, BT and her aide, SC, "discuss and clarify what is happening and decide what to do next."

Sometimes BT presents to SC "a different way of doing something" or she asks SC "why she did what she did." But BT says that she is openminded, SC might be right. If there is disagreement, BT gives SC the benefit of the doubt and does not insist that SC accept BT's interpretation. If SC "doesn't handle a child right," BT "tells her" after class and SC "understands." BT makes it a point never to criticize SC in front of the children. When SC takes charge of a small group of children, BT makes a point of not going over to where SC is and asking her what she is doing: "SC is responsible for what she initiates." SC concurs with BT's statement of their supervisory relationship: "There're some places where the teacher try to like low-talk you and so right there, right on the spot, but Miss Taylor /BT/ is a different way...she tells if she doesn't like it...after everybody's gone. And I think that's a nice way because she's showing respect for you."

SC also perceives the situation as one of minimal supervision on the part of the teacher and autonomy for her. Sometimes BT shows SC a faster way of doing something, but if SC wants to do it her own way she does and BT does not press her. "Nobody stands over me watching me and giving me a bad time. You're on your own and use your own judgment."

The other teacher, EW, talks about supervision as being "informal": "We talk when we have free time about things as they come. She /KU/ can tell me anything; I can tell her anything." EW sees no need ever to reprimand KU: "KU got used to me, she knows what to do."

At Williams center the two teachers have different styles for improving teaching skills and behavior on the part of aides. EW does not think it necessary formally to teach teaching skills to KU: "KU observes and catches on and follows the same manner" as she.

BT teaches SC certain skills through example: for example, how to approach a concept and get it across to children. She also discusses methods of reaching "the hard-to-reach child." Her aide, SC, similarly perceives the ongoing training by the teacher: BT taught her certain arts and crafts, how to teach children how to write, add and subtract, etc.

But BT does not believe that she has the capacity or time to give her aide systematic training. Nor does she believe that the delegate agency should undertake this. She thinks that it would be more productive to have inservice training in a central place, catering to many centers, attracting a multitude of experts: "Concentrated learning in a college situation is very good."

She does not perceive the professional-paraprofessional work relations as problematic in any way on the basis of her experience and thus sees no need for inservice training for either professionals or paraprofessionals to deal with this issue. "Teachers should sit down informally with their aides. This works unless the teacher has a hangup that the professional is up here and the paraprofessional down here." It should be noted in passing that the delegate agency has not included work relations between professionals and paraprofessionals as a topic in the inservice training which university consultants provide for agency personnel.

The Paraprofessional as a Bridge between Professionals and Parents

An assumption in the employment of the poor to service the poor is that the paraprofessional serves as a liaison between the middle-class institution and the low-income population. Indigenous staff are conceived of as "bridge people," able to interpret community life and values to the professionals and serve as interpreters of the professionals to the clientele.

Thus, among the questions to be considered are the following:

1. Is the role of paraprofessionals as interclass communicators accepted in the centers? In what ways do paraprofessionals mediate or facilitate the relationship between teachers and parents?

2. What is being communicated to professionals about community life and values?

3. Do professionals make a concerted attempt to interpret their roles and rationales to paraprofessionals who then transmit this information to the parents?

4. If the paraprofessional does exercise a mediating role, what effects, if any, does this have on professional practices?

The agency education director states that paraprofessionals shed light on the background of children and on the out-of-school influences that affect children: "I think this is their major contribution. Most of them know the community very well. They know the people, they know the things that happened the night before that may make a child act the way he acts in the morning or things that happened over the weekend. I think in that sense they have made a contribution where a professional just couldn't unless of course they lived in the community and none of our professionals do..."

BT denies that her aide, SC, acts as a bridge between her and the parents because she perceives herself as coming from the same background as SC and having also lived in the ghetto. She does not need to use SC as a link to the community because "Parents tell me directly about the community, housing complaints..." SC concurs with BT in denying that her knowledge of the community is in any way superior to that of BT or that she functions as a liaison between the parents and BT.

On the other hand, the sheer presence of SC acts, in BT's estimation, as a powerful force in drawing parents to the center and thus, by implication, coming under the ministrations of professional staff: "Parents like to see a face familiar to them who lives in the community. They can identify with her...someone who didn't go to college and is a neighbor and thus they can more easily participate and get involved in the education of the child."

BT makes an attempt at interpreting her goals and methods of teaching to SC: For example, they have discussions centering around philosophy of education --structured vs. less structured. But it is unclear from the evidence whether the aide's growing knowledge and understanding about educational priorities and alternatives, as presented by the teacher, are communicated to parents and thus whether she operates here as a link going from professional to parents. It is more probable that, if the lines of communication between teacher and parents are open, which BT says they are, BT would deal directly with parent concerns about educational goals and methods.

Finally, we can ask whether the presence of SC has any effects on BT's professional practices. The answer to this question appears to be affirmative. BT argues that she is more reflective than SC about how to handle behavior problems, whereas SC acts on her "spontaneous feelings." This BT seems to admire and attempts to emulate: "SC has been a teacher to me. It was a good learning experience." It would appear from her remarks that BT ascribes superior performance in the management of children to the paraprofessional.

In the case of the other teacher-teacher aide relationship, the aide, KU, is at greater ease communicating with parents than the teacher, EW. She lives in the neighborhood, knows the parents and tells EW about the family background of the children. According to her, the parents feel more comfortable with her because she has been at the center longer than the teacher. KU also informs EW about events in the community and accompanies her to community meetings. On the other hand, KU does not expect EW to explain her methods of teaching because "I know why...I would do the same thing."

Identification Patterns

Both teacher aides identify more closely with their teachers than with parents, and they see parents as perceiving them more as staff members closely related to teachers than as parents like themselves who happen to have jobs at the center. Furthermore, both aides claim that the children see the teacher and teacher aide as co-teachers.

It appears to us, therefore, that the work identity of these aides is primarily determined by the treatment accorded them by children, and secondarily, by the perception parents have of them.

One aide elaborates as follows: Parents do not get close to the teacher or assistant teacher, just as she did not when she was not yet a staff member, but only a parent. Something "stands in the way" of close communication between teaching staff and parents. Thus, since becoming a staff member, she feels somewhat estranged from the parent body and, in her new role, affiliates with the teacher.

The concept of the paraprofessional functioning as a bridge between professionals and the clientele would seem to imply that paraprofessionals, besides taking other groups for reference, should generate a sense of identity of their own, as paraprofessionals occupying a unique position in the Head Start organization. Nonetheless, neither of the two aides had developed an identity as a paraprofessional and a sense of solidarity with other paraprofessionals at the center. In their free time they do not meet informally only with other paraprofessionals and they hold no meetings among themselves. One aide, SC, declares that she cannot imagine just paraprofessionals getting together and excluding professionals, for problem solving requires the professionals' presence: "All should get together and try to iron /problems/ out."

Work Ethic

Both teachers assert that their aides arrive on time in the morning, are dependable and responsible and committed to doing the job. One teacher, BT, however, differentiates the depth of commitment between herself and her aide. She believes that she is more committed than SC because of her freedom from home responsibilities: she is unmarried, has no children and can dedicate herself completely to her job.

Work Relations Between Teachers and Aides

The work relations between teachers and aides are characterized by an egalitarian ethos. The teacher, EW, makes it a point never to "order KU around," because KU "knows what is expected of her and she'll do it." Furthermore, the teacher should not think that "she is better" than the aide and she explains that "We don't use the names 'teacher' and 'teacher aide'.../because/ parents don't know who the teacher and teacher aide are; they see us as working together and we don't stress she is the aide and I the teacher."

Respect, trust, friendship are some of the expressions used by BT to describe the relationship she has with her aide, SC. She asks SC's opinions about what activities to introduce in the classroom; she discusses SC's educational plans on a friend-to-friend basis; she trusts her enough to ask her, on five minutes notice, to take over the class because she is leaving the center temporarily. She further stresses that "We work well together; we understand each other." Thus, in their self-presentation to the outside world, teacher and aide emphasize that they are fundamentally equals functioning as a team, a stance which is corroborated by the flexible division of labor described above.

In the relationship between EW and KU we even have evidence that at times it is the aide who leads or sets the example, and the teacher who accepts her aide's leadership. Thus KU "reminds" EW to put newspapers on the table and aprons on the children when they paint. And EW acknowledges that she follows KU's recommendations in the area of first aid: "She knows more /than I do/ because she has children." Also, as we saw above, BT appears to have learned from SC about managing the children.

Nonetheless, working relations are not as smooth as the ethos of equality and mutuality, enunciated by teachers, would imply. Two sources of conflict exist, which can be classified as differences in philosophy of education and role interpretation.

There is a fundamental disagreement between BT and SC on philosophy of early childhood education and the meaningful way to structure time. Thus, BT says that it is unnecessary to have a very structured program. Her primary aims are to encourage creativity, increase the child's feelings of competence and induce a feeling of excitement from learning. BT emphasizes social skills and sense of self-esteem, whereas SC, in BT's estimation, is more interested in the academic area and thinks that accomplishment comes only when children, for example, know how to write their names. Thus, BT points out, "When I use free time, SC says: 'What are we going to do?' And we're already doing something."

Another indication of conflict in this area is BT's desire for children to be self-directive and self-creative in the literal sense of the word when engaged in art activities. SC, on the other hand, draws for the child, thus providing models for the child to copy, and even guides his hand.

A final source of contention--over role allocation--characterizes the relationship between EW and KU. KU is upset by EW's keeping record writing as her sole prerogative and feels that this, like other role components, should be a joint activity of both teacher and aide. According to KU, EW has no confidence in KU's ability to write and expects her to supervise the children while she does the records.

How are these differences resolved? In the last example, EW simply asserts her authority. When she takes over record-writing activity she asserts in fact that one of the two has to do it while the other watches the children, and that if she delegated this activity to KU, the records "would never get done," in other words, that she has no confidence in KU's competence and that by fiat she is the more competent to do this. While EW and KU have several times argued over who shall undertake this role activity, EW ultimately has the last word.

We note that this may be a perfectly rational decision. But what is important to note here is that the basic ideology of the relationship, while egalitarian, is not totally so and, furthermore, that in a case of conflict it may be replaced by the naked assertion of authority on the part of the teacher.

The same assertion of authority may hold, though not to the same degree, of the resolution of differences between BT and SC. BT asserts that the differences in philosophy of education really do not matter: "Each pursues what she wants in small groups." Although they have different educational outlooks, "it's no great problem." She thus downplays the existing differences and claims that no conflict results. SC also feels that she and BT do not have to agree on educational goals: "Everybody has her own way."

Yet from BT's criticism of SC's attitudes it is evident that SC is very much aware of these differences and that they cause her some unease. BT complains of SC's docility. BT says that SC follows her recommendations in the classroom, but she has a tendency "to accept," resign herself and possibly resent the recommendations: "She should raise objections....She should verbalize what she's feeling so we could talk about it."

A second criticism of SC by BT is that SC often withdraws from active engagement with the children. She leaves the room when children are occupied because she thinks that she is not needed. BT wants SC to "be more active and feel she's needed every minute by children" and she would like her to take a more "guiding role" in the classroom. It is likely that withdrawal, just like docility, represents an adaptive response for SC. She may feel that she is faced with contradictory demands: that she be more guiding, interacting with children and, at the same time, that she not impose standards on them--like helping them draw. There again BT may not make herself clear as to what she wants from SC.

Thus, in the end, differences in approach to education are not really resolved. Neither party to the conflict really converts the other, nor is a compromise reached, and professional status makes might (just as in the relationship between EW and KU), while the less equal of the two to the relationship must endure.

While the source of conflict between EW and KU appears trivial, it may not be because the role activity which is being fought over may have high symbolic significance, both literally and figuratively. In the case of BT and SC the different outlook on education is fundamental to the relationship. Although BT glosses it over as being really "no problem" (because she has her way) they undoubtedly cause some dissatisfaction and role confusion for SC.

TIME TWO

Chart of Statuses and Persons

Teacher	Aide
BT	SC AS*
EW	KU

When we reinterviewed teacher BT a year after our first contact with her, her attitudes toward the employment of paraprofessionals in Head Start were even more favorable and she had come to the point of seriously questioning the validity of the customary differentiation in responsibilities, title and pay between professionals and paraprofessionals on the grounds that paraprofessionals often have superior talents and more extensive experience than teachers:

---

*New.

> Even without those additional courses in education, which often don't add anything to a person's knowledge and sensitivity to working with children, there're people who are so much more talented and gifted in dealing with children and do not have the necessary degrees and certification. We're wasting human resources when we say you cannot be a teacher if you don't have a college diploma. It's unfair that people who don't have experience come into the classroom and take over more or less, compared to someone who's been there such a long time and she should sit back and take orders from this person....Somehow I think we have to get away from the classifications of teachers and teacher aides and that gets into all the hassle about certification. Obviously...where the teacher aides are more knowledgeable than the teachers.../they should get/ the status and the responsibilities and the pay of a full teacher.

BT's aide, SC, had left the center several months before our second round of interviews there and had been replaced by a new teacher aide, AS. Speaking of her relationship with SC, toward the end of the latter's employment at the center, BT remarked that it had grown more harmonious with time. SC, who had originally been quite strict with the children, in contrast to BT's manner, became less strict. Whereas their educational perspectives differed at the time of our first contacts at this center, BT now stated that "Our philosophies began to merge more....Somehow we came to an agreement and she gave up more than I did. In the beginning she wanted all the children most of the time to sit at the tables and all doing one activity. Both of us agreed by the end of the year that more is happening when there are different projects and it's OK to have a noisy classroom."

SC's tendency to withdraw from interaction with children abated with time. AT BT's prompting SC spent more time talking with the children and "taking care of their emotional needs." By the end of the school year, BT truly felt that

"We have a very good team relationship....I really was satisfied with her. I really miss having her around /this year/..." SC did not perform a bridging role at Time Two any more than she had at Time One, for the reasons cited above (p. 38). Supervision of SC by BT also continued to be informal and BT thought it pretentious that she should be "respected as a professional" by SC: Each explained to the other "why she did something in a particular way," each listened to the other's opinion and they then came to a mutually satisfactory agreement.

The type of relationship eventually developed by BT and SC contrasts markedly with the relationship between BT and her new teacher aide, AS. AS is characterized by BT as being a "distant person," who "does not initiate activities" in the classroom, so that BT has "to take more of a lead." BT claims that it is harder for her to work in such a situation, that she much preferred "a partnership to this one-sided type of thing," where "it is me as a teacher and Mrs. S as a teacher aide." She thus deplores the lack of autonomy and initiative of the new teacher aide and looks back with nostalgia on her relationship to her prior partner, SC.

Role relations between teacher EW and teacher aide KU were different at the time of our second series of contacts with Williams center, insofar as the roles of EW and KU had expanded somewhat from what they were during our first contacts there. The teacher BT had just left the center and therefore teacher EW assumed the overseeing and guidance of both her own and BT's classrooms. This meant being responsible for writing reports on children's progress in the other classroom and some delegation of responsibility for the writing of reports in her own classroom to her teacher aide, KU. It will be remembered that record writing was a bone of contention between EW and KU at the time of our first contact. Needless to say, the aide KU was very happy with this increase of responsibility which had been denied her earlier on grounds that she had to look after the children while the teacher filled out records, even though the education director at the delegate agency had stated that all members of the teaching team should have a part in the writing of progress reports and should take turns at doing so. As KU put it, "We may have different ideas about children. Each should put down what she wants."

EW doesn't see herself as being KU's supervisor, supervision being in her estimate the education director's prerogative; and she feels that KU is so familiar with the program that supervision is barely needed.

KU continued to function as an intermediary between her teacher EW and some parents: Thus, she is a conduit of information to EW about families she feels close to, although EW claims that this happens only occasionally and that she can handle most parents without KU's help. EW also has learned about the community (organizations, events) from KU, as well as places for the children to visit.

A basic value conflict between EW and KU, which was not mentioned at the time of our first contact but which came as no surprise since it characterizes teacher-teacher aide relations in most of our centers, consists of varying educational perspectives. KU sees the teaching of academic skills to children as the most important component of early childhood education. On the other hand, EW says: "I want children to be relaxed and happy." She says that especially with the younger children (three year olds) the emphasis should be on teaching them "to get along and to get used to school."

This disparity in educational emphases apparently never came to light in talks between EW and KU, and EW says that "we never expressed our feelings to each other." Asked how important it is for her and KU to agree on educational perspectives, EW states: "It's only important as far as the child...or the classroom running smoothly. Otherwise I guess if she has a group of her own it doesn't matter because she'd be responsible for that group and she wouldn't have to do things as I would do them because she's somebody else." Thus the conflict is partly resolved by EW's assigning the older group of children to KU, who can then work with them on numbers, the alphabet and writing their names. EW places great store on harmony in her relationship with KU: If they are not of the same opinion, one or the other gives in, but "mostly we agree on everything." KU concurs: "We both work along. There are no disagreements. We go along with each other's ideas."

CHAPTER 4

HULL CENTER

TIME ONE

Chart of Statuses and Persons

Teacher	Aide
KN PI	FK
MT	NH
SJ	BD

In the first part of this section we shall present a description of work relations between three teachers and two aides. Teachers KN and PI work half-time in the same classroom, KN in the morning and PI in the afternoon. Both are assisted by one teacher aide, FK. The third teacher, MT, works full-time with the aide, NH.

The second section will be devoted to a presentation of the work relations between teacher SJ and teacher aide BD, which are so deviant from other work relations between professional and paraprofessional teaching personnel at this center, as well as those at other centers, that they deserve special emphasis and separate treatment.

Attitudes toward the Employment of Paraprofessionals

Teacher KN is certain that Head Start would not be a viable operation without the assistance of teacher aides: "I can't imagine what the Head Start program would be like without an assistant teacher....You need two people for 15 children....Frances /FK/ is as indispensable as I am....If I didn't have an aide, I could not have several activities in the room at the same time."

She downgrades the training of professionals and emphasizes the native qualities of paraprofessionals: "It isn't your professional training that makes you a good worker with children. Those who didn't go to college may be just as bright. This was a revelation to me." She also values the diversity which two adults of different backgrounds bring to children: "It's nice to have two different styles, two different personalities for the children. There's always one of us to relate to."

Teacher PI also feels that "it is important for children to get different things from different people." Asked if she thought that professional standards might be threatened by the employment of paraprofessionals she answered in the negative, adding that she did not really know what was meant by professional teaching standards.

Teacher MT denies that the quality of services is lowered through the use of paraprofessionals: "If the teacher has high standards, the aide will too." She stresses the special contribution which her aide NH makes to the program, which she is not able to make: Because NH is of the same ethnic background she can reach Spanish-speaking parents and relate to them and to their children better than MT can. Speaking of their respective strengths and weaknesses, MT points out that NH is more knowledgeable about the community and its residents, but that she--MT--knows more about education than NH.

Role Allocation

Teachers KN and PI share almost all classroom activities with their aide, FK. Some activities, such as story telling, music and leading group discussions, are rotated weekly between teacher and aide. They also share equally in housekeeping tasks. Planning is a joint activity between KN and FK. As KN says, "We discuss our respective ideas, compare notes and compromise and decide who handles a situation." Daily planning is also a joint activity of teacher PI and aide FK, but PI alone engages in long-range planning.

Parent-teacher conferences are held by the teachers only and writing reports on children is also done by teachers. But exclusion of the aide from these tasks is actually self-imposed: According to the teachers, FK "feels uncomfortable" and withdraws from these activities although she has been repeatedly invited by them to join in. However, the teachers consult with the aide before holding teacher-parent conferences, transmit the content of these conferences to her and, before writing a progress report on a child, they discuss the child with her and write up joint views.

Both teachers, who are very favorably impressed with FK's capabilities, also note her lack of self-assurance: FK often has to be "pressured" into assuming leadership for an activity; she is concerned about writing correctly and, therefore, is hesitant "to do anything going down in history" like writing a report. Both teachers comment that they have come to depend on their aide for asserting control and wielding discipline over the children at which she excels, but that FK resents this extra responsibility, which exceeds what she feels would be commensurate with her somewhat negative self-image and feelings of inadequacy.

Teacher MT and her aide NH also share all responsibilities, except planning, the holding of parent-teacher conferences and report writing, which MT keeps for herself. She comments that the latter activities fall within the area of responsibility of the professional teacher; however, she does consult with her aide and asks her for suggestions when she writes reports on children. Housekeeping tasks are also shared: each cleans up the area which she supervises at that time. As MT puts it, "I would never ask anybody to do anything which I wouldn't do myself."

The scope of action of MT in the classroom is greater than that of NH: NH usually supervises one area, whereas MT moves around the room from one group of children to another. She explains: "It's not good for all adults to move in every direction."

According to the aide, NH, tasks are rotated between MT and herself: One of them sets up the classroom in the morning, the other does it in the afternoon; one day MT reads the story, the next day, it is NH, etc. When conferences are held with the consulting psychiatrist about specific problems of children, one week MT goes and then reports back to NH, and vice versa the next week. At lunch time each sits at a different table and later cleans up her table. They take turns at supervising the toileting of children.

Socialization into Work Role

Both teachers KN and PI do not see their relationship to their aide as a supervisory one. KN comments that "we work things out, it's not a supervisory situation." KN and FK meet casually after school and talk over the classroom events of the day: "This is not supervision. We're really friends, as well as co-workers." KN mentions that FK expected her to be her supervisor, upon which she explained that FK was superior to her in experience since she had reared two children, and that she did not feel she could supervise someone of her maturity and experience. At the same time KN attributes to herself "more professional insight," because she has a background in child development, and she is not averse to being consulted by FK on the applicability of a psychological theory to a particular classroom situation.

Teacher PI, far from supervising FK, appears to learn from her and to depend on her. She states that when she first started working at the center she could not have managed without FK: "I didn't know what I was doing and she ran the show for me, but in such a way that I didn't even know she was doing it." PI states that she often searches for support from FK and she looks admiringly upon her ways with children.

Teacher MT, on the other hand, appears to give her aide NH some direction.

She supervises her informally by meeting with her for a few minutes at the end of the day when NH has behaved in the classroom in a way of which MT disapproves. If the matter is important, MT does not wait until school is over, but criticizes her immediately. MT also states that she is open to suggestions from NH and that she may herself be "wrong" in a particular situation where NH is "right." MT believes that NH models her behavior after hers, that she has "picked up my attitudes" and that she "uses the same clichés."

The aide NH mentions learning from MT specific techniques for teaching children colors, letters and numbers and she also feels that she has been helped by MT to improve her speech, when reading a story.

The Paraprofessional as a Bridge Between Professionals and Parents

All three teachers point out the valuable role which the aides perform as intermediaries between the parents and themselves. The teachers comment that the aides are more knowledgeable about the families than they are themselves, that they are more "sensitive," and that parents often avoid teachers and feel more comfortable talking to aides. As KN points out, "It's the idea that she isn't a professional that makes them feel more at ease....Some parents who are worried about their English will talk to the assistant and gradually, if the assistant accepts them, they feel more comfortable with the teacher."

The aide NH, who is Spanish-speaking, is especially valued by her teacher MT for overcoming the language barrier between Spanish-speaking parents and herself. The mediating function which paraprofessionals play even applies to children: The aide FK, because of her sensitivity to neighborhood children, is better able "to quiet a child down," and aide NH relates better to non-English-speaking children than does teacher MT.

Teacher KN is so impressed with FK's easy relationship to parents that she voices the wish that FK would actually handle some teacher-parent conferences.

Teacher MT points out that her aide is a good source of information on family events (such as marital quarrels, or a father's desertion) that may affect a child adversely and that she is thus induced to give that child extra attention. MT gives specific examples of NH's overcoming misunderstandings between parents and herself, due to inadequate communication. Thus, one mother apparently thought that her child, who was hyperactive in the classroom, was rejected by the teacher because of his race. NH was able to convince the mother that this was not true. As MT comments, "The mother was able to accept that from a friend that the teacher doesn't dislike children because of color. The aide sees what's going on in the classroom and can communicate this feeling: teachers really care about kids and what happens to them." Another example of a communication gap between teacher and parent is that of a mother who never came to the classroom and finally explained to the aide NH that the teacher MT had never invited her in or asked her to volunteer her services. NH extended an invitation in the name of MT and the mother now volunteers regularly. Yet, MT is wary of NH's very direct mode of communicating with parents: "She talks to parents too much. She words things in a way that might be misinterpreted by parents. I tell her to always start off with positive things to say."

Both aides FK and NH recognize that parents feel more comfortable talking to them than to the teachers and they think of themselves as intermediaries: When they cannot answer a parent's question they bring the teacher into the conversation or induce the parent to go directly to the teacher. FK, in particular, does not feel qualified enough to hold extensive talks with parents. Thus, she says: "The parents are awed by the teacher. They feel more at ease with a community person....I pave the way to the teacher....I try to redirect them to the teacher....I am afraid of making subjective judgments. I don't have sufficient information to have discussions with parents. Parents get short-term relief when they talk to me. I am a placebo. I don't have enough background to discuss child behavior with parents....The teachers have the academic background plus experience." Summing up her feelings about talks with parents, she says: "It's difficult to keep talks with parents informal. Parents find a way to ask something they are reluctant to ask the teacher. But I want them comfortable enough to go to the teacher and ask that question."

At least one teacher, KN, feels that the presence of paraprofessionals in the classroom is making a difference in the structuring of professional roles. As she puts it, "The professional role is going to change. The professional role should be guidance, helping people work as a team, as well as working with children."

Identification Patterns

The aides FK and NH are perceived by both children and parents as teachers. Thus, as teacher KN points out, "In my classroom there isn't the feeling that one person is the center of the room....There's no status difference....The children talk about me and Frances /FK/ interchangeably to their parents. We're both teachers." And her aide FK agrees: "Teacher and aide are interchangeable in children's minds. They go together. We are both teachers." Similar statements about children's perception of aides were made by teacher MT and aide NH.

Parents, as KN explains, "who don't understand about certification, think of both of us as teachers, because we work as co-teachers." PI gives a more qualified account of how the aide FK is perceived by parents: "Frances /FK/ is considered a teacher by parents who don't know her outside Head Start; as a parent by those who do know her." Teacher MT reports that parents think of her aide NH as being closely associated with the teacher and NH concurs that parents indeed think of her as an assistant, working with the teacher.

Both aides feel the greatest sense of closeness to their respective teachers.

FK's own self-perception is that of a "helper" in the classroom, which cannot be run by a single person. Aide NH points to the problematic character of her self-identity: "I see myself as a teacher, but yet I know I'm not, because there's a professional on top of me and there are things you can't do because it's not your classroom. You have to wait till you get the degree."

The aides have not developed an identity as paraprofessionals. FK says that she has no grievances affecting her relationship to her two teachers; she does not see the point of excluding professionals from deliberations between paraprofessionals; on the contrary, she seems to feel that professionals bring much more objectivity to a situation, whereas paraprofessionals are more subjective, that is, "they interpret in relation to their feelings."

Work Ethic

All three teachers report favorably on the work ethic of their aides: The aides are dependable, on the whole punctual (although one aide is sometimes late in the morning), and they make sure their classrooms are covered if they have to go out on an errand. One aide is said to be occasionally idle: She withdraws psychologically from life in the classroom when she is upset. Her teacher, however, is understanding, commenting that everyone "has the right to act on his emotions once in a while." The other aide is "physically inexhaustible" and has to be induced by the teacher "to slow down" because she sets up too many areas which two people cannot cover adequately.

Both aides are described by the teachers as deeply committed to their work, which has a high priority in their lives. Thus teacher MT says of her aide NH: "She is committed to the job, she takes it home, she comes even when she is not feeling well, she enjoys the work, she looks forward to the next day."

Work Relations Between Teachers and Aides

Both teachers KN and PI attempt to maintain an egalitarian tone in their work relations with the aide FK. KN says that FK is "not a maid, but a co-teacher." To all queries about commending FK, training her, etc., PI has trouble responding because she does not think of herself as the expert or the model but rather sees FK and herself as co-equals. Asked whether FK follows recommendations, PI says: "We plan together and follow through on plans." PI minimizes status distance implicit in the titles of positions: "The distinction between teacher and assistant is a nominal thing. We are co-teachers, we do the same things, we are co-equals." And "There is a lot in a name," she points out, "but the facts of the matter don't warrant the distinction." Both teachers KN and PI also speak of friendship in relation to FK: "We're really friends as well as co-workers."

Close communication with the aide is maintained by both teachers. KN speaks of daily discussions about classroom events after school is over and of constant communication by "eye signals and facial expressions" during the school day. The aide FK and she also exchange information about their respective readings in the field of child development. Teacher PI mentions that FK and she support each other when the children try to play them off.

PI maintains that FK has never given her cause for complaint except once, for a couple of weeks, when FK "was out of it," and for reasons having nothing to do with their relationship. She evaluates FK in the following terms: "Frances is a terrific teacher because she is sensitive, interested, well read in the field....Sensitivity helps you to communicate with children the ideas of love and life." In PI's estimation FK should be a head teacher, in charge of her own classroom.

Though teachers KN and PI do their best to treat their aide as an equal, they are well aware that FK feels great respect and awe of them, as professional teachers. FK ascribes superior virtue to teachers: They are "objective" in evaluating child behavior, whereas teacher aides are more "subjective," interpreting child behavior in relation to their own feelings. Secondly, teachers have a greater fund of information at their disposal than paraprofessionals: They know facts, statistics, not just personal incidents. Far from being aware of the capabilities which KN and PI ascribe to her, FK is fearful of becoming a teacher and wants to continue working as a teacher aide.

Asked about the importance of teacher and aide agreeing on their educational goals, FK says: "I don't feel it's important that the teacher agree with me. It's the other way around: It's more important for me to agree with the goals of the teacher, because she is the teacher." At any rate, teachers and aide hold similar educational philosophies. They speak in terms of "helping children get along together and with adults," "developing self-awareness," and making the Head Start experience an "enjoyable" and "exciting" one.

Teacher MT also stresses the egalitarian character of her relationship to aide NH: "I hope that she doesn't think of our relationship as a supervisory thing, that it's a very friendly kind of relationship, that we are kind of friends. And I'm not the top guy. We are almost--almost on a par." She stresses that channels of communication are open between them and she respects NH's opinions: "Each can go to the other and say what's on her mind. I don't think my word should be the last word. I tell her: 'I'm not always right. Don't brood on it. Tell me.'"

Aide NH states that sometimes she has differences of opinion with her teacher MT (for example, about whether or not a child is ready for a certain activity) and that she may win the ensuing discussion. She describes MT as "a wonderful person to work with," and their relationship in the following terms: "We don't tell each other how we feel about each other, how great it is to be working together. We just know and feel it because of our friendship." She contrasts MT's manner with that of a former teacher, who expected her to do all the cleaning up: "I expect from the professional that she not put me down low, because I'm a human being and, just because you have the degree, /not to expect me/ just to clean up after you." MT and NH seem to be "tuned into the same wave length." Thus NH relates how they often think of the same thing at the same time: Without consulting each other each may bring in the same materials or the same books. Thus MT once said to NH: "You must be reading my mind."

MT and NH hold similar perspectives on what children should get from their Head Start experience. They stress social development: learning how to share with one another, learning autonomy and self-control; the acquisition of formal academic skills is expected to come "naturally" with no specific time set for it. MT thinks it important for an aide to share the same philosophy as the teacher. Thus, she defines a good aide in the following terms: "She can take cues easily from the teacher, she supports the teacher in whatever she does, whose philosophy is the same about the children....If two adults work in the classroom there should be a common philosophy about children, that we're not working and pulling apart, that we agree on what to expect from children." According to MT, NH fits the bill perfectly.

The only cloud in their relationship, according to MT, consists of MT's disapproval of NH's use of "earthy language, full of colloquialisms and slang." However, she has never mentioned her displeasure to NH. It should also be noted that, for a long time, NH read stories where she mispronounced words and that MT was afraid of bringing this to her attention. MT took over story time and when NH asked her what was wrong, she finally told her. NH accepted the criticism in good humor and began to practice at home with her husband. Apparently her English improved sufficiently for MT to entrust story time to her again.

Teacher SJ and Aide BD: A Deviant Relationship

First and most important, there seems to be some doubt that the teacher SJ enthusiastically supports the employment of a paraprofessional to share the work with her. At any rate, she gives no credit to the paraprofessional's family experience in helping her to manage children and appears to be dubious about the actual contributions which the teacher aide can make to the operation of the classroom.

Rather than the flexible allocation of responsibilities which characterized other teacher-teacher aide relations, SJ each week assigns her aide, BD, to one corner of the room (block corner, arts and crafts, etc.), which she is to supervise and from which she is not supposed to move even if no children are playing there. BD quite naturally feels that "working with SJ is like sitting around doing nothing," that she is not "needed," and that "I'm just like...if something turns up...to do it." Furthermore, she resents the fact that she does not participate in planning--SJ sets up the schedule of activities by herself--and is not allowed to set up the classroom. In view of SJ's imposition of a limited participation by BD in the classroom, it is not surprising that SJ believes BD incapable of running the classroom when she is absent.

Rather than the mutual consultation between teacher and teacher aide in other classrooms, SJ is adamant that she has a well worked-out philosophy of teaching which she expects the aide to carry out without fail. She gives the impression that she is better at every task and is in full control of the classroom, with little need for the aide to help her. She maintains that she is faster than the aide in doing housekeeping tasks and monopolizes even these. Indeed, as the child therapist consultant to the center comments, "I don't think that Mrs. J could allow anybody else to function...to take away anything from her stature."

SJ has developed a highly structured supervisory arrangement. She says she holds a formal conference with her aide once a month and makes a written evaluation of her every second month. Her supervisory conferences include some training in child development and methods of discipline. Although she thinks that an outside agency should do this kind of training, she does not feel inadequate to the task. She rejects the idea that professionals need training in the proper use of paraprofessionals.

The aide, BD, appears to resent SJ's self-attributed all-knowing professional expertise. BD claims on behalf of lay expertise her own superior knowledge of children because she has children whereas SJ does not: "Someone with children knows more than someone without....She only knows what she read....I have experience."

The aide is not conceived by SJ as performing a bridging function between herself and parents. SJ, as a matter of fact, is intent upon denying that BD affects her relationship to parents in any way: "I don't permit it to happen..." She does not think that aides are more knowledgeable about the community and the backgrounds of children than the professionals. It need hardly be added that the employment of the aide has not affected SJ's way of teaching.

Although BD sees herself as a "teacher's helper" and thinks she is sc perceived by parents, she feels definitely closer to parents than to the teacher, SJ. This is in contrast with the pattern of identification which characterizes other teacher aides. Furthermore, BD is the only teacher aide who believes that paraprofessionals have interests of their own which might be furthered by meetings among themselves, so that they could talk about the teachers.

In contrast with the generally satisfying work ethic of other teacher aides, BD is described by SJ as being half an hour late each morning, as having taken the job "because it is convenient," as being less than fully committed ("It's just a job for her") and as putting home before the job.

Work relations between SJ and BD are marked by the assertion of authority on the part of SJ and concurrent rebellion by BD. Thus SJ states that BD "must go by my philosophy, what I believe," she must learn how "to follow," which is not difficult since SJ is "structured," and she is not permitted to inject ideas into the program. SJ perceives herself as "being fair, not taking advantage," as adhering to principles of "good human relations" such as praising the aide, and as being recognized by the aide for her professional expertise.

BD, on the other hand, does not concur with SJ's "philosophy," particularly her ideas on discipline--SJ is "too strict for three year olds." She claims that SJ never compliments her so that she has no idea whether or not she did well in a particular situation; when she makes suggestions SJ invariably turns them down. As BD says, "SJ feels she has the degree and 'no one can tell me what to do.'" Furthermore, BD acts contrary to SJ's expectations when she can get away with it (when SJ is out of the room): For instance, she participates in the children's play although SJ insists that children should play only with peers and not adults, and she has taught the children to write their names in the face of SJ's opposition. It is obvious that BD chafes against the rigid structuring of the classroom and her own restricted place within it: "I would like my own class...or just more authority."

TIME TWO

Chart of Statuses and Persons

Teacher	Aide
DM*	NH
MT	RD* SS*
FK	BD

At the time of our second round of field work at Hull center, three teachers (KN, PI, and SJ) had resigned. (It will be recalled that SJ was the highly authoritarian teacher whose relations with her aide, BD, were described separately. She resigned under pressure from the center director who was well aware of SJ's underutilization of her aide and, in addition, was critical of the "adult-centered" and overly structured, overly controlling nature of her classroom and SJ's overemphasis of the intellectual to the detriment of emotional and social areas of the classroom program.) One new teacher (DM) had been hired, as well as two teacher aides (RD and SS) to work with the holdover teacher MT. One teacher aide (FK) functioned as teacher half the day and as teacher aide the rest of the day; NH continued in her role as teacher aide, assisting a new teacher DM; and BD continued as teacher aide assisting teacher FK.

The teacher DM has highly favorable attitudes toward the employment of paraprofessionals in the classroom: "An assistant is indispensable. I couldn't conceive of being in the classroom without an assistant....I think the whole goals of the program would be lost if one person had to spread herself so thin. It's absolutely indispensable. There should be three people in the classroom."

The division of labor is egalitarian according to DM: "Everything should be shared, including planning. I come up with the main things and NH contributes. She also introduces art activities which she likes doing." They both do record writing: DM initially sets down her ideas on the record forms, but she leaves space for NH to add what she wishes.

---

*New.

Supervision is informal: there is a casual interchange of ideas and opinions between teacher and aide. The aide NH states that if teacher and aide get along well there is no need for formal supervision on the part of the teacher. Rather than one-way socialization, NH states that she and the teacher DM "learned a lot from each other." As a matter of fact, at the beginning of their relationship, NH thinks that it was she who supervised DM "because DM's experience was with older children and she was not used to the Head Start routine." Indeed DM admits that she learned a great deal from NH, especially her manner of relating to children who are upset: "NH is very sensitive; she can step into a situation and smooth it out."

NH performs a true bridging role between the teacher DM and parents. On home visits made at the beginning of the school year NH "took over" because she knew the parents and DM was new, but after a period of time DM asserted herself: "She grew up in the neighborhood. She knows everybody. So in the very beginning it was very helpful to me. She was really introducing me to the whole setup and to the people....After that there was a period where it was kind of transitional, like a little sticky, but we worked it out because we talked about it. What happened was I began to feel more comfortable and I began to be much more assertive and I wasn't depending on Nancy and I think she had a little trouble with it because her real desire is to be a teacher. But we talked about it."

Thus, for a while after this switching of roles, NH was somewhat unhappy because DM used a different approach in the classroom from the one NH was accustomed to. According to the center director, NH was a "strong personality," she wanted to take over the classroom and DM and NH were having "a little power struggle." At any rate, DM recognizes NH's important role in reaching parents, in part because the latter shares the same languages with them: "The teacher aide can be a valuable link with parents and sometimes can reach the parents more easily than the teacher can....With my Spanish-speaking parents Nancy has been absolutely indispensable because she not only translates but she translates literally /i.e., everything/."

DM wants her aide NH to be perceived by children in the same manner as she is herself perceived: "There shouldn't be any distinctions as far as children are concerned. I think that would be a very negative thing if they felt that one person had more authority than another in the classroom....I go out of my way to avoid stratifying people into categories with the children and if she were presented to the children as an assistant and not a teacher it would be a category right away. I don't like that."

DM speaks of her relationship to NH as follows: "I think that the relationship should approach a team relationship as much as possible...although I think that perhaps the teacher aide should not have the ultimate responsibility of the classroom....What's important...in the teacher-teacher aide relationship is that the communication has to be kept open all the time and I think that takes working at. I may do something that she doesn't like and she may do something that I don't like and it may cause a momentary crash, but as long as we can talk about it..." Some communication between DM and NH is probably nonverbal, as is implied in the following statement by DM: "We work very well together, I think. We kind of learn to understand each other without having a lot of explanations. We both do things pretty easily with each other without having to describe and explain."

DM's and NH's perspectives on early childhood education, although having different special emphases, are alike in stressing the overall psychological growth of children at this age, rather than academic development. NH stresses the importance of children learning to share toys and equipment, to achieve self-control and to become autonomous. DM states her philosophy of education as follows: "I'd like them to go away with a very good feeling about themselves. I'd like them to be able to feel that they can function well and be satisfied with their accomplishments. And I'd like them to feel that they gained the ability to express how they feel to other children and to adults in a way that's not destructive to them....I suppose there are certain academic goals in mind. For me that is secondary....Primarily in my mind is trying to reach the child and to help him feel good about his accomplishments so that when he does go on to kindergarten he'll just be ready to learn and he won't be tied up inside."

The holdover teacher MT had lost her former aide NH between our first and second period of field work at the center. At the time of our second contacts, she was working with two new aides, one of whom (SS) had recently come on the job and the other (RD) who had been working with MT for several months.

MT felt that there had been no significant change in roles either for herself or for the aides since our first period of field work at the center. Only the aide RD, however, was involved in planning activities; since the aide SS was so new she was, at the time of interviewing, assigned each day to a particular area of the room and did not participate in planning activities. RD states that MT is so intent on having her (RD) involved in everything related to the children and the classroom that MT wants the aide, RD, to participate in record writing also. But RD has demurred so far: even though MT feels that RD might perceive some characteristics of the children which MT overlooks, RD is uneasy about record writing.

The other aide, SS, looks forward to being involved in planning activities as soon as she is a little more experienced in the job. She is also happy over the fact that MT does not force her to engage in activities which she dislikes: "Marjorie's been kind. She knows the things that I don't like and she hasn't forced me to do them yet--finger painting, play dough. I said: 'As long as you don't make me make play dough we'll get along fine.'" In her training of SS, MT has explained the function of finger paints and water play to her and she believes that SS will eventually come to like them.

Supervision of the aides by the teacher takes the form of discussions when the children are in the playground or the class is running smoothly with no need at the time for classroom supervision. The casualness of supervision is underlined by RD: "We'll talk, like, during an activity and MT will explain to me what's going on, what to do, and how to handle a certain child....It's just like an everyday conversation, our supervision." MT herself points out that although the aide SS is new, "She moves very easily without too much directing from myself."

MT states that both her aides inform her of the family situations of the children--for example, the severe physical punishment a child receives at home which might explain why he is fearful of adults in the classroom. A reverse flow of information also takes place from the teacher to the aides: MT explains to the aides the whys and wherefores of a new activity or the reason for handling a child in a particular way. The aides also perform a bridging role vis-a-vis the parents. As SS puts it: "A lot of time a parent does feel uncomfortable talking to a teacher and that if she talks to an aide she might not say tell this to the teacher, but basically this is what she wants you to do--to relay it to the teacher."

The aide RD has a strong sense of identification as a member of the teaching staff: She thinks she is perceived by both children and parents as a teacher and she feels that her closest affiliation is with her teacher. She has no sense of identity specifically with paraprofessionals and feels that paraprofessionals meeting together cannot solve problems that also need the attention of professionals. Thus she says: "Because the teacher in the long run has the yes or no. You know, it's her room. And most every teacher, no matter how sweet or nice she is, will always let you know--I am the teacher and you're the assistant." The other aide SS, because she is so new, is not respected as a teacher by the children: "They do know that there is a boss and that you're kind of under and when the teacher's not there you can have a ball. Three year olds know it.... They know who's bossman." She aspires to being perceived by children and parents as a "professional person, but not in such a formal way that they feel uncomfortable." She has not developed a specifically paraprofessional identity.

Both aides are praised by MT for their dependability and punctuality and work relations between teacher and aides appear to be harmonious. SS speaks of being mostly in agreement with MT about the running of the classroom and that she must be "fitting in OK" because MT said to her: "I hope I never lose you." SS adds: "If a person in our class isn't functioning as she feels they should, she's not going to beat around the bush. She's gonna let them know. And so she hasn't had to do this kind of thing with me, so I feel, even without her saying that to me, that I must be functioning satisfactorily."

The aide RD speaks in superlative terms of her relationship to teacher MT: "Marjorie /MT/ is one of the greatest teachers. I mean I was just lucky being placed in her classroom because she's amazing. She's so fair--I mean like she never put me down, because I made a lot of mistakes. She never like said: 'Randy, this is wrong, you're not supposed to do this.' She never made it, like, criticize me or embarrass me in front of my kids or other people. She, like, let me know in a nice way....I feel she respected me when I came in. There's a lot of people that think, I'm your boss and you just do what I say....I'm just lucky I have a nice person to work with."

FK functions as a teacher for half a day and as a teacher aide the rest of the day. Here we shall describe her role as a teacher working with teacher aide BD.

FK feels that the shift of role from full-time teacher aide to part-time teacher has been a difficult one: "Even though I am in a manner of speaking functioning in this capacity, I'm still not comfortable with it. I suppose that says it all." As a teacher aide "you know you're not directly responsible for the state of the room. I had to get used to being in charge, to having full responsibility for the classroom." She is unsure of her teaching style for which she claims no originality: "I am at this point still using things that I learned from each person that I have worked with...the style is an amalgamation of all the people I've worked with, rather than anything that I've developed for myself or by myself."

The roles of FK and her aide BD in the classroom are similar, and planning for the day or week is a joint activity. FK is quite hospitable to ideas which BD might have concerning the curriculum--e.g., FD introduced songs and a game for putting blocks away--because "it makes it easier for me," that is, pooling ideas is more advantageous than for FK to rely only on her own. BD confirmed FK's receptivity to her ideas.

FK does not feel that she supervises or trains BD in any way; thus she states: "I don't have to offer suggestions because she really does quite well without..." She also feels uneasy about giving advice to BD "because there are no cut-and-dried answers to children's misbehavior." Finally, FK feels that she does not have much more knowledge than BD and therefore that she cannot really teach her. BD, on the other hand, thinks of FK "really as a friend": she does not look upon her as a teacher or supervisor "whether she has a degree or not."

No special bridging function is performed by BD since FK is also a neighborhood resident, has worked for several years at the center as a paraprofessional and still functions as a paraprofessional for part of the day. Furthermore, FK sees no evidence that parents have drawn away from her or feel uncomfortable with her because she now functions as a head teacher.

BD identifies closely with the teacher FK on the basis of children's perception of them: "They really consider both of us as teachers, because they really don't know who the teacher is and who is the assistant teacher. They just know us both as teachers and as Frances and Barbara."

FK and BD appear to have a harmonious and egalitarian relationship. Thus FK says: "I have not had to give orders or lay out a road map for her....I haven't found it necessary to say to Barbara: 'Now you should go over there.' We move with the children and when we are needed." According to FK, she and BD are "close acquaintances" and have known each other for a number of years. BD, on the other hand, considers FK as a "friend," not as a teacher in charge: to tease FK, BD will call her "boss" and ask for an order. BD speaks of FK as "being fun to work with": BD feels comfortable in her class, more than with any other teacher she has worked with in the past and ascribes this to their longtime friendship. BD also feels that FK is less critical of her than other teachers have been: for instance, if she makes a mistake in reading to children, FK "wouldn't pay it no mind."

CHAPTER 5

ADAMS CENTER

TIME ONE

Chart of Statuses and Persons

Teacher	Aide
MX	CH
FY	DG
NZ	HW

Attitudes toward the Employment of Paraprofessionals

All three teachers at this center emphasize the indispensability of paraprofessionals to the running of a good classroom. Thus MX points out: "[The presence of paraprofessional assistants] improves teaching....You can do more things when you have two people, more teaching kinds of things. You can set up two groups. You can have the children who are faster and the children who are slower and you can have two different kinds of activities going on at the same time. You can plan for more things to go on than if you're just one person and trying to handle everything by yourself. So it does allow increased learning, increased activity." She adds that an assistant can "give things" to children that the teacher cannot "simply because the assistant is a different person from the teacher."

MX denies that teaching standards might be lowered by the presence of a paraprofessional in the classroom: "Teaching standards can only be improved by more good people in the classroom." She questions the notion of superior virtue ascribed to professionals: "I'm not very impressed by the word 'professional' [in the sense that this implies] that I've gone to college and have a certain number of credits in education. This doesn't make me a superwoman."

She sums up her attitude: "I couldn't get along now without an assistant. You become so accustomed to it and so dependent on it that I don't have strong enough words to say how important and vital an assistant is." About her attitude to her particular assistant CH, she says: "If Charles wasn't there I'd go to pieces....I could not ask for a better assistant....I feel lost without him.... When somebody's good you become dependent upon them....When you get used to working with an assistant...you love to have that assistant there to share everything with you." She also appreciates the fact that her assistant is a young man because she feels protected by his presence when they go on home visits and because "he provides a masculine image" in the classroom, especially for fatherless children.

FY, another teacher at the center, points out that no teacher at the early childhood level resents having an aide and that "the more aides the merrier" because for certain activities like crafts one needs one adult per two to three children. The presence of an aide also enables her to leave the classroom to confer with the social worker or consultant psychologist and to attend parent meetings.

She thinks that professional standards may become more salient as a result of the employment of aides: "The presence of a paraprofessional makes the professional feel like an example of his profession. You know you're being observed and watched....Your tendency is to be more of a professional." On the other hand, being "too much of a professional," acting like a "supereducator" may be a handicap and here the paraprofessional has the advantage. He is more natural, more relaxed, more spontaneous with the children and may get a "better response" from them: "Dennis /DG/ has a unique quality in working with children....He has the same kind of openness as the children. He gets down on the floor and plays with them, laughs with them. It's an instinct because he's not trained in this area."

She appears to capitalize on these qualities in her aide. Thus, she says that she uses professional vocabulary, which is part of her "make-up," when she talks to parents (e.g., a child is guilty of "antisocial behavior"), whereas DG is direct and concrete ("He hit somebody").

FY speaks in superlative terms about DG: "It's sort of hard to discuss an aide in terms of Dennis because I think he's rare, he's a very rare case....He's not a normal, ordinary human being. He has a lot of qualities that are so uncommon that to talk about him as just an ordinary run-of-the-mill aide is almost valueless."

NZ also waxes enthusiastic over the utilization of aides to assist teachers. She says that after an aide has been in the classroom for a while he becomes just as important to the room as the professional. The children look upon the teacher and the aide as "Mommy and Daddy." The fact that her aide is a man is advantageous in several respects: he can easily pick up children, play ball with them and move heavy equipment. She points out that it is not necessary to have had education courses to be a good aide; experience in the classroom with help from a good teacher are sufficient.

For this teacher, the full use of an aide and equal sharing of tasks between them raises a question in her mind as to the equity of the salary differences between them: "Aides are all definitely used to the most and they're all equal. All the teachers really are dependent on their aides and the responsibility is split right down the middle. I...I just feel almost guilty....It's really unfair that I should be getting so much more money than the aide."

It should be noted that the employment of men as teacher aides is an explicit policy at this Head Start center. The consulting psychologist commented on the advantages of this policy as follows: "...the fact that...the second person in the classroom is a man is a substantial addition to the classroom, especially with very young children, some of whom don't have a father in the family."

Role Allocation

The teaching responsibilities are fairly equally divided between teacher and aide in MX's classroom. Thus she says: "There's no one thing that I do or that Charles /CH/ does. It's a flowing back and forth with both doing everything ....He does all the teacher things during free work-play time. I'll be with a child over here and he'll be with a child over there and he's teaching just as much as I am."

Housekeeping tasks are also divided rather than being relegated to the aide: "We'll all do menial tasks because I hate to be like the one who does all the creative work and have Charles do all the mundane, you know, unpleasant chores.... Sometimes it's relaxing to set the table and let him do the more creative stuff. Today Charles felt like reading a story, so I set up the cots. Sometimes he has an idea and introduces it to the children."

MX thinks of CH and herself as a team: "He is almost interchangeable with me. Like if I'm sick and I'm not there I know that everything is going to go on just as if I were there....He's a number one backer-upper. Everything that I do he can do and it's like if I'm feeling ill...or I'm upset, he can always jump in and take over. Which is a fantastic feeling." Furthermore, CH evidences much initiative: "He participates...and he comes out with his own ideas and feels free to jump in and if he has an impulse or gets an idea for a good thing to do, he'll just say: 'Hey, I want to do so-and-so' and I just say: 'Go.'"

Nonetheless, some responsibilities are out of the purview of the aide. Thus CH does not ordinarily engage in talks with parents, he is not involved in writing reports on the children or on the content of home visits, although he may be asked his impressions when the teacher composes her reports. Finally, planning of the curriculum is clearly within the teacher's sphere and she introduces new academic subjects (phonics, numbers), although the aide may introduce art ideas and new songs. MX explains her reasons for not sharing these responsibilities with CH: "These are chores that I wouldn't assign to Charles because he works very hard and gets paid nothing. If I gave him the planning responsibilities there would be nothing to separate us" /and thus to validate the salary differences between them/. Yet CH feels that he is also involved in the planning of curriculum since new activities which MX introduces are discussed with him.

In the second classroom the teacher FY expresses her sense of the allocation of responsibilities in the following terms: "Sometimes you think of the assistant as the houseboy of the classroom. I mean they're the clean-up men. But this isn't the situation at all. It's become a partnership. Both of us are working with these children. And both of us are also doing custodial work. So it's like I'm his assistant, if you will....Then I might be setting up the tables ....It just depends on who's doing what. Whoever's doing what, the other does whatever else has to be done."

However, she usually handles "circle time," when group learning takes place and she organizes craft projects. She also takes charge of writing reports on home visits, although she consults with the aide while writing. She claims that she does the "clerical work" because she has a nicer handwriting than DG.

Informal talks with parents are handled by both of them and FY ascribes a natural superiority to DG in this activity: "Dennis is very natural, he doesn't come on as a professional. He comes on as a person with genuine interest in their children. He doesn't use educational jargon." FY feels that she often does and that this use of language is inappropriate with parents.

Her aide DG, when first hired, was pleasantly surprised that he was not expected only to do the housework but could participate in teaching and he now feels "like I am a part teacher, not just a housekeeper." He works with individual children doing puzzles or building with blocks. He introduces new activities into the curriculum. Sometimes he handles circle time, when he reads a story or teaches color recognition or time concepts. The teacher does as much housekeeping, in his estimation, as he does. He states: "Now that I'm thinking of her I can't really see that much difference between what I'm doing and what she's doing, except...she has more meetings with the mothers....We're doing a lot of the same things....We're sharing both the things that neither of us really likes to do and the things that we both like to do....I feel that this is more or less like a team."

In the third classroom, the teacher NZ states the interdependence between the aide HW and herself as follows: "It's definitely a team working into such a way that we're almost inseparable. I think...anything is interchangeable. Anything that I do Harry /HW/ can do and vice versa....We have completely equal responsibility." Nonetheless she makes several exceptions to this ideal of equal responsibility: for instance, she takes upon herself all planning, although she attempts to incorporate the aide's suggestions; she usually takes over "group time" (period of group learning) while the aide sets the table for lunch, although once or twice a week the aide may handle group time; she writes reports on the children, although she pools her ideas with those of the aide; she also does formal conferences with parents--the aide, however, is permitted to sit in, although he usually does not participate in the discussion. Our observer of this classroom noted that "this appeared to be a true 'team-teaching' situation."

The aide's contribution to the classroom is especially valued in the area of creative art and dramatics, where he is particularly talented. He is also in charge of rest time, which the teacher finds hard to handle: he plays the guitar to signal the beginning and end of rest time and the children have learned to lie quietly in-between. Finally, he goes on home visits with the teacher, which participation she sees as a "moral support" of her.

The aide appears to be satisfied with his role, although he states that he does not enjoy the housekeeping tasks: "I do most of the things that Nicole [NZ] does...I get to do just about whatever I want." He feels that he is sufficiently consulted when the teacher plans out a week on a particular topic for group learning and that he has a chance to take charge of the group for sections of the day or week.

In all three classrooms, if the teacher is absent, the aide takes over as teacher because, as one teacher puts it, "he is familiar with the children and the routine," and the substitute is subordinate to him and helps him. One teacher, NZ, states that she can absolutely trust her aide, when she is absent, to do "just as good a job" as she does.

Socialization into Work Role

It appears that, in all classrooms, the teacher does not think of herself as a supervisor of the aide, nor does the aide think of the teacher as a supervisor in regard to himself.

MX and CH think of themselves as co-workers. Constant conversation during the day takes the place of formal conferences. If MX does not approve of what CH does they talk it over and come to a mutually agreeable solution; at any rate MX does not assume that she is necessarily right in the situation. If she is pleased with something CH does, she tells him: "That's great, fantastic!" In her estimation CH takes her recommendations to heart, but is not afraid to suggest better ideas.

Inasmuch as CH is not formally trained by MX, she says that he learns by watching her: how she sets up the room, what explanations she gives to children, how she uses her voice. She recognizes that CH "instinctively" knows as much about the emotional needs of children as she does. Nor is she averse to learning from him; for instance, she picks up ideas from him, which he, in turn, has picked up from other teachers he has worked with in the past. She has also learned from him how to handle "difficult, especially fatherless kids."

In the second classroom, the teacher FY and her aide DG are satisfied with their communicational arrangement. Neither of them likes a formalized situation of supervision, which would inhibit spontaneity between them. They hold informal discussions during rest time or after the children have left for the day. If the teacher does not like something that DG has done, she discusses it with him at the end of the day; if she is especially pleased, she praises him.

She sees no need for formal training of the aide: "Dennis /DG/ is like a sponge, he just seems to absorb the right things so easily...it's been virtually unnecessary for me to actually point things out to him. I mean we've sat and discussed things, but I've never thought of it in the sense of teaching him anything becouse he always seemed so aware of what was going on anyway. And so, while he's learning, it's done on a very informal basis." Like the teacher MX, FY appears to have learned as much from her aide as he has from her. Thus, when she first came on the job, "he knew more of the routine than I did, supplies, how to arrange trips, he did a lot of instructing me."

The aide DG corroborates FY's description of how he learns: he watches the teacher, imitates her, copies the songs, art, games which she teaches. He has come to understand the whys and wherefores of classroom activities from FY's explanations of benefits which children may be expected to derive from them. Furthermore, she has taught him certain skills, particularly in arts and crafts.

In the third classroom, the teacher MZ made a transition between a more formal supervisory relationship with her aide HW, when they first started working together, to a more informal one, akin to that prevailing in the other two classrooms. Thus, at the beginning, MZ instructed HW about the structure of the room, the routines, transition between activities, basic ground rules. She taught her aide "my style of teaching...he must adapt to that, then he can go off on his own and add his ideas." Now her relationship to HW is more informal: "There is never formal supervision. We're always talking about things going on."

HW corroborates NZ's description of their relationship: "I don't think of Nicole /NZ/ as a supervisor because of that teamwork spirit....I don't feel like I'm being supervised heavily like somebody's watching all my movements...in that sense I'm on my own. But I have someone available to me when I want to know something, there's a good give-and-take between Nicole and me..." He relates that they talk together about what they are doing and the ideas they have during the course of the day and especially after school. Some topics of conversation are: disruptive children and how to handle them, parent-teacher relationships, the daily plan for the classroom, and trips. HW feels that he has learned a great deal from NZ, such as how to structure the classroom and schedule time for different activities and how to conduct himself to get the best responses from children.

The Paraprofessional as a Bridge Between Professionals and Parents

The teacher aides at Adams center appear to perform less of a bridging function between teachers and parents than at the other centers because there are no cleavages between professional staff and the clientele of the center. Also most of the professionals and paraprofessionals live in the area, so that paraprofessionals are not privileged insiders with respect to knowledge about the community and its residents.

Thus the teacher MX claims that there is no ethnic or racial basis for a bridge function: "Paraprofessionals have no bonds with parents that I don't have." She says that parents communicate easily with her.

NZ says that neither parents nor children are "the typically disadvantaged" and that she finds it easy to talk with parents, although there are a few exceptions in parents who find it more comfortable to relate to the aide. NZ disclaims having learned anything about the community from her aide.

FY also makes the point that "the backgrounds of people at the center are not too dissimilar," most people, according to her, being lower-middle and middle-middle class. She maintains that some parents may even be better educated than she is, so that her aide (who has had less education than she) could hardly function as a mediator between such parents and herself. Whatever problems parents have are learned directly from them, rather than from teacher aides or the social service staff. Rather than unilateral learning from aides about the community, what takes place is exchange of information and common discussion of problems about the community on the part of the entire teaching staff, most of whom live in the neighborhood.

One out of the three teacher aides sees matters somewhat differently. Thus CH reports that sometimes parents approach him with questions that they are loath to ask the teacher MX, because they feel uneasy with her on account perhaps of self-consciousness about their English. He is thus placed in the position of an unprejudiced, accepting role. He then talks to MX and ultimately arranges a conference with all three parties represented. He also attempts to make the teacher more approachable by telling parents a little about the teacher's life--where she lives, what she is interested in, that she is not wealthy, etc. He thus sees himself as "bridging the gap" between parents and the teacher: because aides have worked at the center longer than the teachers have, they know the children and parents better, so parents are more at ease with them and the aides are more at ease with parents than teachers are. It should be noted that, according to CH, MX wants him to attend parent meetings "that might help ease tensions with the parents."

The aide BW corroborates NZ's report that he has functioned as a "middle ground" between parent and teacher on occasion and established more adequate communication between them. Thus, one could speak of his performing an ad hoc, rather than an institutionalized, bridging function. The presence of the teacher aide does not automatically affect the parent-teacher relationship; "it depends on personalities."

Finally, the aide DG states that there is no need for a bridging role since the children are "just like WASP middle-class children"--they are interspersed in the neighborhood and absorb middle-class values--and since lines of communication between parents and teachers are open and parents talk to both teachers and aides.

Identification Patterns

According to both teachers and aides, teacher aides identify most closely with their respective teachers. This identification pattern is partly determined by the perception which children and parents have of teacher aides.

Thus MX says that parents perceive CH as a teacher "because he's half teacher...I mean he plays a terrifically important part in everything that happens to the children..." Children see him as a teacher because he does the same things MX does in the classroom; they listen to and respect both of them, and "they love Charles /CH/, they hug and kiss him as readily as they do me." Apparently they sometimes see teacher and aide as "Mommy and Daddy," and this CH takes exception to: he doesn't want to be a "father image," but rather wants to be seen by the children as a man, a friend and an equal to the teacher. He says that MX gave him the opportunity to introduce himself to the children not as a subordinate person in the classroom but as one of two adults and the children respect both of them accordingly.

In the case of the aide DG, while children also see him as a teacher, parents' perception of him is more complex: he is seen by them as a young man, a college student, as an aide helping the teacher, and as their children's teacher. DG identifies closely with the teacher and wants to be seen "not just as an aide," but as a teacher.

In a way analogous to CM, the aide NW speaks of children seeing the teacher and aide as boy-teacher and girl-teacher and as being married, but he does not seem to object to this designation. He is seen by parents as closely associated with the teacher NZ, although he occasionally performs another role vis-a-vis them, namely, as a babysitter in their homes. He feels very close to the teachers "because I can speak as a friend with them, not as a professional" and, in case of conflict between the teacher and a parent, he tends to side with the teacher. He definitely thinks of himself as a teacher: "/I have come to think of myself as a teacher/ just recently....When I first came here I didn't know what I was, I was really that lost. And then I began to realize that I was an aide and...when I was doing menial tasks to kind of learn my way around. Now I feel that I can do the things Nicole /NZ/ does and that our jobs are almost interchangeable."

No specifically paraprofessional identity has emerged among the three aides, though one of them appears to think that meetings between paraprofessional teaching and social service staffs might be useful to express feelings outside of earshot of professionals and another believes that ideas should be exchanged between different combinations of staff people.

Thus CM says that paraprofessional teaching and social service staffs should talk together "because there's not that separation of degrees and years of experience and we're on a little more of the same level." He stresses the difficulties which the teachers have in conveying to parents that children should not be late in arriving at the center and that they should be picked up on time when school is over. Thus, he thinks that the teacher aides could convey to social service aides the concerns of teachers with these matters and that social service staff, because they are parents themselves, could convince the other parents to do the teachers' bidding.

The third aide, HW, vehemently denies the value of a paraprofessional identity. He opposes meetings of paraprofessionals at the center, saying: "There's very little tie between what our jobs do...our paths hardly cross...our jobs don't really relate..." Furthermore, he is opposed to attempts by paraprofessionals to form a union and states unambiguously that he "would not go on strike against the center to get more money."

Work Ethic

According to the estimation of the teachers, the teacher aides are very dependable, work very hard, "don't goof off," and are concerned about the coverage of their classrooms when they unavoidably have to take a day off. One aide apparently began by being habitually late in the morning and was also unreliable in other ways. The teacher held several discussions with him about the importance of being on time and being responsible. Since then he has taken her reproof to heart and has become as punctual and reliable as the other aides.

Work Relations Between Teachers and Aides

The work relations between teachers and aides at Adams center appear to be smooth and amicable as they are described by them and also underscored by the consulting psychologist: "There has been a situation of outstanding harmony between the teachers and the teacher aides in all three classrooms. I don't think I have observed any conflict whatsoever." These work relations are bolstered by a congruence of basic educational goals between teacher and aide in two of the three relationships.

MX makes a case for the necessity of basic agreement between teacher and aide about the stance to be taken toward children: "I think there has to be a certain amount of agreement on basic things like what a child is, how to treat a child, that you respect a child, that you don't talk down to a child, that you don't frighten the child....If you're in agreement on those basic things, then it's all right if one thinks it's more important that they learn numbers and another one thinks it's more important that they learn letters, because then the children just get more. They get extra."

She need not have added this disclaimer since she and her aide concur completely in their aims for the children and their philosophy of education. She wants the children to leave Head Start with "a strong, healthy, well-integrated ego, able to handle life and make it in school." Teaching academic skills is secondary in her estimation, although she assigns them a place in her curriculum. Her aide CH speaks in concurrent terms: children in Head Start should get a feeling of self-respect and accomplishment and should develop a strong ego; the stress should be on the emotional life of the child and learning skills--such as the alphabet, colors and forms, etc.--should be deemphasized. He states that MX and he have similar aims: that academic learning is secondary and that children should distill an essentially enjoyable experience from Head Start.

Aside from this basic congruence of purpose MX and CH speak of their relationship as being one of constant "collaboration" and "team work," in which discussions are held daily about the learnings, emotional problems and personality conflicts of children. According to MX, CH is well able to take constructive criticism and CH states that MX is truthful with him about his performance and that he likes it this way. He also waxes enthusiastic over MX's occasional lavish praise of his performance, when she shows his art work to other teachers and parents.

She claims that there has never been a cloud over their relationship: "We're much too much in tune to ever have /a disagreement/....We've never had a problem like I wanted to do it one way and he felt that was wrong and one should do it another way." One possible source of tension apparently does not make any difference: "I'm not jealous of the fact that some kids, particularly fatherless ones, relate better to Charles /CH/ than to me."

FY and DG also have a superlative relationship, although it is not undergirded by a similar philosophy of education. FY says: "When we first started working together, of course we didn't know each other at all and we stood at opposite ends of the room and looked at each other. But then it was very easy and....I mean it just came naturally that we started working as a team. There's no kind of personality conflict. We enjoy the same types of things where the children are concerned and find humor in the same types of situations." She continues in the same vein: "I found in this school a very unique situation that I've never had with an assistant before....I almost don't consider Dennis /DG/ an assistant....I don't see it as...an overling-underling type of thing....He's an equal in many respects in dealing with the children....He responds to them much the same way that I do, like a big brother....In terms of dealing with the children I could hardly use the term 'assistant'...in referring to Dennis or any of the boys that work in the school because they're kind of a unique group of young fellows."

DG is correspondingly appreciative of being considered as an equal: "As I view what an aide is in a classroom I should be in a subordinate position working under the teacher. But...with all three of the teachers I worked with it hasn't been." He appears to be surprised: "I'm not taking orders and yet I don't have loads of responsibility on my head....When someone has all the responsibility, then usually they're giving you the orders." He feels that he is treated by FY as a "co-worker" and stands on "a personal basis" with all the teachers. He also relates how much he is depended on by FY: "She is always saying I'm her right arm man and 'this is the kid that I couldn't function without.'"

FY believes that she and DG hold similar views on educational goals, yet when separately queried, their educational emphases diverge. Thus FY stresses social development: children should be taught positive attitudes toward education and toward teachers, how to relate to others and respect their rights, how to function as a group, that is, play and solve problems together. "Along the way," she states, "I teach the colors and numbers." A secondary emphasis is placed by her on physical development, such as manual dexterity which is fostered by encouraging children to engage in art work.

DG, on the other hand, wishes to "give children the best possible education and compensate for the deprivation of educational stimulation from their environment." He stresses "intellectual development": they should learn "to solve problems, understand relationships, understand the city, be able to count, develop reading skills."

It should be noted that, in this case, as is true at other centers, the differences in educational ideology between teacher and aide do not lead to conflict. On the contrary, DG states: "It is not important that the teacher and aide agree on aims. Each can emphasize what he wants. All these things can operate at the same time"; while the teacher, FY, as we noted above, is not even aware of the issue.

The relationship between MZ and HW was marred at the beginning by HW's lack of punctuality, but MZ, after remonstrances to HW, succeeded in getting him to come in on time and to acquire a greater sense of responsibility toward her and the children. After initial difficulties, she says: "We really became friends

....We have fun together." HW concurs with NZ's description of their relationship: "The most thing is her manner....She changed my manner so I was more able to communicate....It's accepting, it's cheerful, it's open, it's willing, it's interest. And it's a willingness to have a good time with one another...to enjoy what you're doing and make it an experience rather than a job....I feel like I'm personally Nicole's friend...and that when we're working together we're really helping each other....Just about everything we do is together. It's mutual support what we're doing."

NZ also expresses her absolute dependence on her aide: "When we're together it's good...we both can sort of relax a little because we're both depending on each other....There are some areas where, if he weren't here, I would be almost lost...and that's *especially* at rest time. He has *such* control over those children and they won't listen to anybody but him."

When HW does something with which NZ disagrees, she is not loath to criticize and HW appears to respond to her criticism: "I like to be told what's wrong and how to improve." When a problem arises with a child, they consult each other and work out a strategy of management together.

NZ encourages HW to use his initiative and introduce his own ideas into the curriculum and she feels that his efforts have been productive. She also appears to learn from him in the context of specific class activities: thus she claims to have watched HW when he organizes the children to participate in the making of a mural and speaks of his superiority to her in bringing off this enterprise.

Their philosophies of education are very similar: both speak of developing in children certain basic socio-emotional attitudes and behavior: a positive attitude toward school and learning, curiosity, relating to others and working in groups, self-control and responsibility. Both place a secondary emphasis on intellectual development: reading readiness, colors, numbers, etc.

But the consensus about educational goals does not seem to add much to the relationship, any more than dissensus detracts from the quality of the other teacher-aide relationships we have described. As HW remarks: "I don't think it would be harmful if the teacher and aide didn't agree; maybe you'd get a better balance of curriculum against social learning....I don't think it of major importance." HW sums up his relationship with NZ: "I feel much freer, looser with Nicole than I did with my previous teacher. I can express myself better. It's much easier to talk to Nicole....I was inhibited with the other teacher."

TIME TWO

Chart of Statuses and Persons

Teacher	Aide
CH	
BA*	HW

By the time of our second contacts with Adams center, all three teachers had left as well as one teacher aide. Of the two teacher aides remaining, one, CH, had permanently assumed the responsibilities of head teacher, the other, HW, had become head teacher for a few weeks until a teacher was found, upon which he reverted back to functioning as a teacher aide.

CH, the teacher-aide-become-teacher, experienced some difficulties in assuming his new responsibilities: "I had always been a co-pilot, now I am a pilot ....I am only able since recently to be able to accept my role and coordinate..." He admitted to having been "a little afraid at first, insecure." His aide is a parent whom he respects highly and attempts to treat as he himself had been treated in his days as a teacher aide: "Now I am her supervisor and I am trying to do for her what other people have done for me. I respect her as an adult, as my senior--she knows more about the world than I do. In places where I do have more experience I share it with her in a way that doesn't hurt her or put any gap between us."

---

*New.

The teacher aide NW enjoyed the few weeks he spent as head teacher--"enjoying the freedom of deciding what the class would be doing and expressing myself with the class." He would have liked to continue in this position, but since he was neither certified nor close to completing college requirements for certification (he was not going to college at the time), he was compelled to reassume his former position as teacher aide.

NW appears to be unhappy about his current relationship with the newly hired teacher, BA, with whom he works. Looking back nostalgically upon his relationship with NZ, the teacher he worked with a year earlier, he says: "With NZ I felt like a co-teacher more than I do now with BA. I have less responsibilities, I have fewer decisions to make, I am not involved in planning....I feel like I'm expected to stick to a smaller role than last year. I feel out of place stepping out of that."

Conferences with BA are infrequent, he has not expressed his feeling to her and thinks that she is interested neither in his feelings nor in his ideas about the content of the program in their classroom. In only one area--music--in which he is expert and BA is not, does she leave the initiative to him.

NW is definitely thinking of resigning from his job and looking for a new line of work, mainly because his salary is low and he does not feel that education is the right career for him.

CHAPTER 6

JEFFERSON CENTER

TIME ONE

Chart of Statuses and Persons

Teacher	Aide
FG	MN
AI	DR
BK	EC

Attitudes toward the Employment of Paraprofessionals

All three teachers at this center had very positive, accepting attitudes toward the employment of paraprofessional teacher aides in their classrooms. Thus FG states: "It's a definite help, absolutely. You really need two people --you need an assistant in the classroom....Because the young children, you need to be with them all the time. They need a lot of supervision, they need a lot of extra attention, a lot of extra help. See, without an assistant it's really hectic....As you know, with small children they are forever going to the bathroom. They spill, they're always spilling when they're having the juice or having lunch....And the assistant is there--so something happens, she can grab... take over this table. Or a child has to go to the bathroom. You cannot leave the room to go to the bathroom with this child and leave 14 children in the classroom by themselves....You have the block area, which I feel is the most dangerous area in the room. This has to be supervised at all times....One person cannot just be right at hand to prevent an accident. So an assistant is most helpful."

The teacher BK wishes that she could have even more help in the classroom than she now has: "I would like to have three people in the classroom so that I could do more. It would enable me to work with more children, small groups of children, give more children individual attention. For instance, I do have two or three children who are really, I feel, are first grade people and they really can do some formal learning--words, phonetic sounds....I do not have a chance to work with the child at all...because there's two teachers in the room and if the aide is working with five or six and if I were to take just this one child, it would be seven or eight children, you know, unattended." For her, the assistance given by the aide improves the quality of her work "because it helps me to do better work, because she's assisting me....Without her I couldn't do it, the same type of work."

Yet these two teachers appear to feel some concern over the effects of paraprofessional employment on professional standards. Thus BK states that although professional standards are not precisely lowered, "I do think they could be elevated if you had persons with professional training...a person who has some command of elementary education." And FG, who felt that in general aides are even more committed to their work than teachers and who had a most ideal relationship with her own aide, reluctantly formulated one objection to the use of aides: she says they speak "ungrammatically" and thus constitute poor language models for children.

Role Allocation

In FG's classroom the aide MN participates in all activities: "She's my assistant. And usually assistants work along with the teacher. And we share our responsibilities. Her duties are the same as mine. We have circle time together. During activity period we share that together. We both supervise all areas. We both serve the lunch to the children. We both go to the bathroom with them."

Teacher and aide plan the daily schedule together, they make home visits together, they write up separate reports on home visits. They are both involved in writing progress reports on the children and each has a notebook in which, during the course of the year, observations on children are jotted down. When the time comes to write a final report, this information is correlated and they both write the report, which is written in final form by the teacher. FG depends very closely on MN who is purported to have a good memory and therefore remembers idiosyncracies of the children. The only activity which FG does not share with MN is holding parent-teacher conferences. However, FG shares the content of the conference with MN, who also reads FG's report before it is transmitted to the central office.

Housekeeping tasks are evenly divided between teacher and aide. As FG puts it, "It's all shared. Even to cleaning the room....If some of the dishes have to be taken to the kitchen after lunch...we do that--whoever is free at that time ....If some child spills milk and if I'm the nearest, I'll get the mop and mop it up. We don't wait for each other. Whoever is free or closer to the situation just does it. There is no one person in the room that has to do the dirty work. We do it together. We share it. I mop up, sweep up, clean up as much as she does."

She stresses the importance for the teacher of participating in such tasks: "In talking with a lot of my co-workers, a lot of teachers feel as though they shouldn't as a teacher have to sweep the room or wipe up the water, washing dishes, utensils and things that they use. But...I feel a little different. First of all, I feel like it is your classroom and these are things that you are doing in the room. I feel as though that's part of the teacher's job....This is a part of your program, your responsibility for the little menial things that have to be done." She states an important reason for sharing housekeeping tasks with the aide: "I feel like in the classroom you're teaching health, safety, cleanliness and everything. If you don't portray these things how can you really teach the children these things that you don't carry out yourself! I could not leave a classroom that is untidy."

Since she makes it possible for the aide to participate in all activities in the classroom, it is not surprising that FG states that when she is absent, "I don't have to worry about the classroom when she is there because she can take over and she knows what to do." FG underlines the importance of the aide's role in "filling the teacher's shoes": "I feel as though an assistant to a teacher is just the same as the vice-president or assistant secretary. If for any reason he is out ill or has to be away, then his assistant is able to take over in his place and carry on in the same manner."

The aide MN agrees that she is involved in all activities, including art, which she at first did not like but was encouraged by FG to participate in, and reading to children, in which she has developed some proficiency. She corroborates that FG shares equally in the "dirty work." Commenting on the characteristics of this classroom, our observer notes that the children "respect the authority" of the teacher aide as much as that of the teacher and that the aide plays a "very responsible role" in the classroom.

The teacher AI and the aide DR also share most classroom responsibilities, including planning the day's activities and writing reports on children. The holding of parent-teacher conferences, however, is the teacher's prerogative. AI makes a special effort to give DR extra tasks, such as fixing the bulletin board or decorating the room for a party, "to make her feel as if she really is somebody."

AI is eager to participate in housekeeping tasks: "You know, first they came out with the word 'assistant teacher.' But then in Head Start they came up with the word 'aide,' which meant the aide is supposed to pull out the paints and so-to-speak she's supposed to do the dirty work. But I don't feel this.

And I don't allow this to happen, because I will do the dirty work faster than Mrs. R will." She appears to resent DR's reluctant participation in doing housekeeping tasks and, when she criticized her jokingly for this, DR's response was that "she is no cleaning woman."

In the third classroom, the role allocation pattern is similar to that in the two classrooms just described. Tasks are interchangeable, with the exception of parent-teacher conferences, which are held only by the teacher. The teacher BK speaks of her aide EC's role as "assisting the teacher in whatever the teacher does. I think she is the second teacher and whatever the teacher is trying to put over, I think she assists the teacher. If that teacher has been absent, she steps in the role of the teacher and takes on the responsibility of the teacher. And this is doing...in the teaching process and the physical process and all the duties of the classroom..." EC has a perception of her role which is congruent with that of BK: "My aim as teacher's aide is to do all I can to support the teacher, you know, be right behind her....I would like to just work with her hand in hand....Whenever she make up the agenda for what we're doing... whatever she decides to do I want to be able to just follow through on it..."

BK encourages EC's autonomy: "...I always tell her, any area she wants to work in, anytime she feels that she wants to initiate a new project or anything, feel free...because I would like for her to feel comfortable." EC apparently has introduced her own ideas in the area of art and in the teaching of concepts during "circle time"; she has also introduced some new games.

The housekeeping work is rotated between teacher and aide. BK explains: "I never say, you know, the clean-up is yours. I, usually, one week clean the easels, the next week she cleans the easels. One week she does the floor and tables, the next week I do the floor and tables, so that she doesn't feel that she's just there to do all the physical work." BK is perfectly confident that, in her absence, EC "can carry on the same as I could do." Yet our observer's comments on this classroom do not validate the teacher's and teacher aide's descriptions of role allocation between them. According to the observer, EC is largely inactive and does not seek out the children. Furthermore, according to the delegate agency director, EC is the only aide in the agency who does not fully share responsibilities with the teacher.

Socialization into Work Role

Within a context of informal supervision and training, the aide MN has learned a great deal from her teacher FG. According to the latter, MN is very observant, she watches FG and is eager to try out activities on her own (such as art work, reading stories, singing songs) which FG has shown her by example how to carry out. Thus FG says: "I will give her a little suggestion, she tries to carry it out. I imagine it's like the old saying: she tries to follow in my footsteps." MN has learned new activities introduced by FG, so that she can take over the classroom if FG is out of the room. FG has attempted to instill self-confidence in MN by constant encouragement and MN is now "more efficient, more sure of herself than when she started, she is more comfortable doing things ...she has bloomed." MN concurs with FG: "Mrs. G really has learned me to trying to express myself more because a lot of time I knows the answer, I knows what I want to say but I'm afraid to bring it out, thinking that it may be wrong.... She always tell me, even if it's wrong I must say it anyway because all of that is a part of learning."

FG feels that MN is very receptive to her suggestions and often asks for information and guidance. If FG criticizes MN she does so sparingly; she praises her for good performance. There also appears to be some reverse socialization, that is, the teacher FG has learned from MN art ideas which the latter brought back from her inservice training at New York University.

The teacher AI and the aide DR also appear to learn from each other. Thus AI taught DR various arts and crafts activities and DR in turn taught AI cooking skills. AI feels that her supervision of DR, concerning the way to handle children, is minimal because "Here's a young lady* who's had three children of her own. And certainly she would, without going to school, she would know how to deal with children, because she's had some. This is experience, you know, what she's done for her children."

AI appears to be afraid of exercising any supervision whatsoever: "There are some things that I might see her do that I don't go along with but she might not know it. But I might not dare say anything: I might wait--maybe at lunch time. And in a kidding way I might say something to keep from hurting her. Because she appears to be very sensitive. And I think that you have to know a person and pick the time when to really say and when not to really say." Thus DR took it amiss when AI one day suggested she do some cleaning of the classroom and since then AI has been loath to exert her authority.

In the third classroom the teacher BK holds both informal talks and formal conferences with her aide EC. She explained to her the meaning of different areas of the classroom to children so that EC would know how to use these areas; she has also explained the benefits which children derive from different activities. Yet, although BK and EC have worked together for three years, BK gets very little feedback from EC when she supervises or trains her. EC seldom asks any questions and BK does not know how EC feels and is forced to assume that EC understands what she tells her. Again, as in the relationship between AI and DR, BK has to be very careful in expressing criticism because EC is "highly sensitive and may defend herself for what she's doing."

---

*DR is actually considerably older than AI.

The Paraprofessional as a Bridge Between Professionals and Parents

In one case out of three the teacher aide does not function as an intermediary between the teacher and parents, in the second case she does so function, and in the third instance it is impossible to determine whether she performs that role since teacher and aide offer contradictory accounts.

Thus, FG states unambiguously that her aide MN does not affect her relationship with parents or children and that parents feel free directly to talk to her. As a matter of fact, some parents even come to her with problems of housing and job location, which are properly within the province of social service staff. Thus, rather than the teacher aide or social service personnel functioning as a bridge between parents and teacher, it is the teacher in this case who constitutes the first recipient of requests for help.

The teacher AI disclaims that her aide DR takes any part in establishing the teacher-parent relationship and she states that when parents want to ask questions they always come to her, unless she happens to be absent. DR, on the other hand, says that many parents talk to her rather than to AI because she is "more friendly" and "they feel more at ease with me": the teacher aide is from the same community as the parents, they know one another, are on the "same level" and "can talk better." Once parents have talked to her, she refers them to the teacher who, she feels, is better able to respond to their concerns.

The teacher BK clearly feels that her aide EC is initially closer to parents than she is and that "I would not be as close to them without her." EC lives in the community, has gone to school with some of the parents and it is therefore not surprising that these parents feel more comfortable with her. They share some of their problems with EC, who then relates them back to BK. EC is also better informed than BK about community happenings and family events and she transmits this knowledge to BK. Nevertheless, BK does not permit EC to interpret the classroom program to parents, since she feels that only the teacher should interpret the program to prevent possible misunderstandings by parents.

Identification Patterns

All three teachers state that they want their teacher aides to be perceived by both parents and children as teachers, not aides, carrying the same responsibilities as themselves. They also state that teacher aides, indeed, perceive themselves as closely identified with the teacher they work with. Teacher aides concur that they are respected as teachers by children and parents and that they think of themselves as teachers, closely related to their respective teachers.

Thus, teacher aide MN remarks that at this center "you don't know which is the /certified/ teacher," so indistinguishable have teacher and aide become in the eyes of children and parents. She also reports having heard parents say to their children when she says goodbye to them: "'Don't you hear *your teacher* talking to you! Say goodbye.' They respect me now."

None of the aides appears to have developed a paraprofessional identity. One aide, EC, explains that paraprofessional meetings would just be "gripe sessions," that teaching staff and social service staff "have nothing in common to talk about" and that, if teacher aides have complaints, they should relate them to the teachers they work with.

Work Ethic

All three teachers state that their aides are extremely dependable and punctual, that they call the teachers if they are to be unavoidably absent, that they work hard and are conscientious.

Work Relations Between Teachers and Aides

Teachers and aides appear on the whole to enjoy harmonious work relations, although each relationship is marked by a strong disparity between the teacher's and the aide's educational emphases.

The teacher FG speaks about the beginning of her relationship to MN in these terms: "She was sort of a little shaky, a little nervous, a little timid when I came, not knowing what type of person I was going to be to work with. She had experiences working with someone she didn't get any help, any strength from....And in about two or three weeks she was just so delighted. She just came up to me one day and put her arms around me and said: 'You're just marvelous. You're just wonderful.' And she says: 'When I heard I was getting a new teacher I wonder how she's going to be and I wonder am I going to please her. How will she accept me with my shortcomings...'"

FG relates how a "beautiful relationship" developed between them as she made efforts closely to involve her aide in the life of the classroom: "I really just made her a part of the program, of the room and just bringing her right in on it, not to put her aside and say: 'You're here to do the menial jobs of the teacher and I'm taking charge, this is my room,' which happens to a lot of professionals: 'This is my room, I am the teacher and I run the room and you do as I say,' which is very bad. This is not the way that I work. She right away understood that I was there not only to help the children, also to help her, include her. And it just started off in a couple of weeks working as a beautiful relationship and so many people have come in and have admired and spoken about the relationship we have in our room."

FG makes it a point never to let MN forget the important role which she plays in the classroom: "I don't let her forget she is a vital part of the program and especially in the classroom....I just let her know. Just telling her like what a help she is in the room, how wonderful it is to work with her and how well she works with the children and I always let her know...that she is really appreciated..."

FG and MN consult together every day and FG invites MN's initiative in proposing new activities; she feels that MN has "a lot of good ideas and suggestions" which they put into effect: "It's not all 'teacher say, teacher do'.... We compromise, we come to a mutually agreeable decision." When decisions are made as to what areas of the classroom will be open and who will supervise them, FG consults with MN as to what area she would like to supervise, rather than telling her: "I want you to supervise..." FG also depends on MN for observation of the children: "Sometimes another person may see something the teacher didn't notice. The teacher may overlook, the assistant sees it."

FG speaks in superlative terms of MN: "Let me say this about my assistant: she's fabulous, outstanding, a wonderful, wonderful person to work with, very warm, very understanding, very cooperative....I'm quite pleased with the way she performs in the classroom....She reads wonderful, has a beautiful handwriting, spells well."

The aide MN also waxes lyrical about FG: "She is an outstanding teacher, she knows her work. She is a wonderful teacher, the children love her." MN perceives their relationship as that of a team and their work relations as egalitarian: "I always thought of teachers as upper level and I am a lower level. Which now, I am different. I just picture teachers just as another individual ....So really I think they're just down-to-earth people just like I am." MN doesn't think of FG as a supervisor in any way: "She used to always tell me both of us is teachers in here." She has been encouraged by FG to introduce her own ideas into the program, some of them garnered in New York University inservice training. All in all, she sums up her relationship to FG in these words: "We've never had a cross word. If she was unhappy about anything, she didn't let me know."

Teacher and aide agree that their work together has led to personal growth on MN's part. Thus FG says: "We work so closely together and I have really worked with her through a lot of personal things that I seem to understand her. She understands me and I have helped through quite a lot of personal ordeals. And even the director feels as though we belong together as a team....I have given her strength and I have given her a lot of encouragement....The director feels I've been very good for her. And I've done wonders with her." And MN concurs: "Mrs. G really brought me out." She felt very unsure of herself when she started working with FG and now she has become able to speak her mind.

FG and MN have become quasi-inseparable. Thus FG says of MN: "She thinks I'm the greatest teacher and I am excellent. She kept urging me to accept this /new/ position, 'because you are the person for it and you are just marvelous.' She says: 'I hate to lose you, I hate for you to leave me.'"

Despite the excellent quality of their relationship, FG and MN have divergent educational aims. Discussing what she thinks children should get out of their Head Start experience, MN says: "We teach them how to use a fork, table manners, to say thank you, you're welcome, please, good morning, first and last names, their address and telephone number." FG, on the other hand, stresses developing self-confidence, stimulating their intellectual interests, particularly through books and stories, developing an awareness of environment and getting along with peers--she emphasizes both emotional-social development and the instillment of cognitive attitudes, whereas MN is more interested in concrete learnings in the areas of etiquette and beginning academic skills.

These differences in basic educational goals between teacher and aide are dismissed as being of little import by FG: "I don't feel as though there should be absolute agreement. I feel as though everybody has their own ideas and it doesn't have to be an absolute agreement of the way I feel. She doesn't necessarily have to feel the same way. We are different individuals..."

The teacher AI and the aide DR also see themselves as a team. As AI puts it: "We work very closely together. And we never have arguments. So it has to be as a team. We have not yet had any disagreements or anything..." AI emphasizes the necessity for a close relationship: "It has to be togetherness." Her evaluation of DR is positive: DR is hard-working, interested in the children, bright, she writes well and would make a very good teacher.

An incipient cleavage between teacher and aide over educational goals--AI's are more social-emotional and DR's more academic--has not really materialized because AI has decided to emphasize academic skills in order to meet parent expectations. Disagreement over basic educational perspectives would probably not have been tolerated by AI, in contrast to the attitude of the teacher FG (see above), since AI states that "...it's impossible to work in a room with a person who's always disagreeing, or there's no communication." The aide DR also states that it is important for teacher and aide to agree over educational goals.

Yet there is a source of conflict between teacher and aide over the appropriate stance to take vis-a-vis children's play and work. AI is critical of DR's over-directiveness: "She does things for children instead of letting them do their own thing and find out their own mistakes. I can't get this over to her to let them do things by themselves. I tell her to leave children alone."

The relationship between AI and DR appears to be less egalitarian than that between FG and MN: thus, according to the aide DR, the teacher AI decides what area each will work in and she is less amenable to incorporating DR's ideas into the program, having, for example, turned a deaf ear to DR's suggestions for teaching numbers. Our observer of this classroom notes that there was "not much contact between teacher and aide" and that they evidence "little warmth or fondness for each other."

In the third classroom, both teacher BK and aide EC state that they work closely together and share experiences. According to EC, BK welcomes her suggestions. As EC puts it: "We really have a beautiful working relationship. I think if there was anything going wrong she would feel free to tell me." And BK relates that once, when she told EC that she was thinking of taking another job, EC had said: "Wherever you go, I'm going too."

Again, in this case, we note wide discrepancies in educational perspectives. The teacher BK describes her philosophy of education in detail: the emphasis should be on the "whole child"--social, aesthetic, moral, emotional; curiosity and independence should be fostered; children should learn how to get along with one another; they should have happy years in Head Start. She minimizes academic learning, speaking of it as incidental to the main task of social and emotional growth. Rather than giving in to parents' wishes, as the teacher AI did, she explains to parents that knowing names and ABCs is less important at this age than the total social-emotional development of the child. Her aide EC, on the other hand, when queried, upholds an academic emphasis; children should be taught letters and numbers.

Apparently BK and EC are unaware of the basic discrepancy in their orientations because both state that there is agreement between them on educational aims and methods. Thus EC says: "/Agreement between us/ is very important because I don't think we can get anywhere, both of us pulling different ways.... The children would be all mixed up."

At one time there had been some disagreement between them in matters of discipline. Thus BK relates how EC had used "the old way of discipline" (that is, coercive and punitive), but that she had learned a more psychological, verbally-oriented mode of setting limits by watching BK's modus operandi. However, according to BK, EC is still not at ease in dealing with disruptive behavior and she leaves the handling of difficult children to BK.

TIME TWO

Chart of Statuses and Persons

Teacher	Aide
UV*	MN
AI	DR
BK	EC

At Jefferson center at the time of our second contact, one teacher, FG, had left the center and her aide, MN, now worked with a new teacher, UV. MN feels that her role has not changed since our first interviews with her. Housekeeping is shared between MN and UV. MN states categorically: "Some teachers make the aide feel they are at the bottom. Mrs. V is not like that. Some teachers just want the aides to do the dirty work." However, she is less involved in planning activities with UV than she was when FG was her co-teacher.

MN states that her relationship with UV is an egalitarian one, that they share information about the home situation which children and parents give them, that UV has learned a good deal about handling younger children from MN (UV had been used to older children), and that she leaves the handling of difficult children to MN. MN thus feels that she has some responsibility for the classroom, she is proud that the teacher UV is dependent upon her skills in some respects; however, she does not speak of her relationship with UV in the same superlative tones she had used when speaking about her relationship with the former teacher, FG.

The teacher AI continues to be pleased with her aide DR and is positive in her attitude toward the use of paraprofessionals in the classroom: "I think this is the greatest thing that ever happened. With 15 children there has to be a second person. There needs to be really a third person. Having other adults in the classroom makes it much easier. The children get more out of it."

---

*New.

AI appears to deviate from her earlier position of dividing housekeeping work equally between herself and the aide. She states that it is DR's responsibility "to see that the room is in order--dusting, cleaning, sweeping." However, she qualifies this remark by saying that she "pitches in" when the aide cleans. Nonetheless, she is ambivalent about giving chief responsibility for cleaning to the aide--in view of the aide's feelings on this score: "Mrs. R /DR/ told somebody that she was like a scrub-woman and I think she wants to be recognized as not being a scrub-woman. She wants to do some nice clean things too, so we don't get into the bag where she has to mop. I don't want her to feel that just because she's the aide she has to do this."

Shades of authoritarianism have crept into AI's relationship to DR. Thus AI monopolizes planning and communicates her plans to the aide, who is expected to follow her recommendations; she also states that "children know who is the 'teacher'"--and, by implication, who is the teacher aide. She describes her perception of her relationship with DR as follows: "Mrs. R never seems to be resentful, no matter what it is. And she has a clear idea that I am the teacher, that I am the one that has the highest authority and I am the supervisor and she has to follow this. And I think this will eliminate pressure and arguments and hurt feelings if this is recognized." And she adds: "To me we have a beautiful understanding." DR appears to have adapted to the somewhat autocratic manner of AI: She reports that she has no difficulties relating to AI.

The teacher BK has remained favorable to the employment of paraprofessionals in Head Start: "It's something that must happen. I couldn't function without it." She sees her relationship to her aide EC as basically a partnership, tempered by her greater knowledge of child development: "We have a one-to-one relationship, like partners. I feel I should know more than she knows about child development, that she should ask and I will tell her some of the things she doesn't know, but it's a partner relationship: we share with each other."

Thus BK always explains the whys and wherefores of activities and instructional techniques to EC, with particular emphasis on the benefits which children are expected to derive from them. On the other hand, EC shares with BK her knowledge about families and the community. Thus, on a day when Father's Day cards were being made by children, BK's knowledge about whether the children had fathers or not brought about a modification of some cards to apply to other adult male friends of the children. Nevertheless, BK has some reservations about the bridging function of EC vis-a-vis parents. While it is all right for EC to transmit concerns of parents who feel closer to her than to BK, BK frowns upon EC's assuming a role of interpreting children's behavior and the classroom program to parents because she is concerned that the information EC would give might be misleading.

BK feels that she and EC have similar educational perspectives, although EC is more concerned than BK with problems of behavior and discipline: "I think her concern is the same as mine: the development of the child intellectually, creatively, emotionally, socially. I think she might be more concerned about the behavior of the child, if it's conforming to a certain standard, his discipline."

EC appears to be satisfied with the quality of her relationship to BK: she feels that she has learned skills from BK and that she has experienced no difficulties in running the classroom with BK.

CHAPTER 7

INTER-CENTER COMMONALITIES AND VARIATIONS IN WORK RELATIONS

TIME ONE

The attitudes of teachers toward the employment of paraprofessionals are uniformly positive and accepting:* Aides are indispensable because the size of classrooms is beyond the managing and teaching capacity of one person. Secondly, the quality of teaching is improved and children benefit in their learning because more activity areas can be opened and more individual attention can be given. Other themes are that children have the opportunity to relate to different styles of teaching and personalities (Williams and Adams centers) and that paraprofessionals who are of the same ethnic background as children relate to them better than the teachers do (Hull center).

Some teachers particularly value the special characteristics which paraprofessionals bring to the job: experience in child-rearing, which leads to competence in management of children in the classroom (Williams center), indigeneity in the community, which implies knowledge of the background of children (Williams and Hull centers), and personal qualities such as naturalness and spontaneity, which permit good relationships with children (Adams center). At Adams center, teachers are particularly appreciative of having male aides because they provide a masculine image, particularly to fatherless children.

Teachers at all but one center state that professional standards are not threatened by the employment of paraprofessionals if the teachers themselves maintain high standards (Hull and Adams centers) and that standards may become even higher if teachers think of themselves as models for paraprofessionals (Adams center). At Jefferson center, an exception to the pattern, one teacher thought that training of aides in the area of early childhood education would improve professional standards and another teacher objected to the "ungrammatical" speech of her aide.

---

*The exception is teacher SJ at Hull center, who doubts that the aide contributes significantly to the operation of her classroom. Work relations between SJ and aide BD are so divergent from the pattern characterizing work relations between teachers and aides in our sample of four centers that they will be summarized separately at the end of this section.

Little differentiation of roles characterizes the work relations between teachers and aides in all of our centers: both professionals and paraprofessionals refer to the interchangeability of tasks between them. Planning of classroom activities is generally a joint function, as is creating a learning environment, that is, setting out materials and equipment. Areas which teacher and aide supervise are rotated. Responsibility for directing group learning is also rotated, although the teacher predominates in instructing children in learning basic concepts. The performance of housekeeping and custodial tasks and the toileting of children, often referred to as "dirty work" or "menial work," is shared equally by teachers and aides. Teachers almost universally affirm their conviction that such work should not be relegated by them to aides or a mockery would be made of the egalitarian relations which they would like to see prevail between aides and themselves. As our observer on occasion noted, after doing classroom observations, "Someone who did not know would wonder who the teacher in charge was."

The role activities which teachers generally monopolize are: the holding of teacher-parent conferences and the writing of progress reports on children. Even with respect to these activities, there are instances where teachers would willingly share them with their aides (Hull center) if the latter were willing, and where a teacher and aide write separate reports on children, which are eventually combined (Jefferson center). At least one teacher (Adams center) is uncomfortable with the incongruence between complete interchangeability of roles and the large difference in salaries between her aide and herself and she opts for a marginal differentiation of roles by allotting the planning function to herself.

It can be stated with some confidence that the marginality of role specialization between teachers and aides at all four centers underlies the facility with which aides can take over classrooms from teachers, when the latter are absent.

At all four centers there appears to be some reluctance on the part of teachers to speak of the socialization process which aides undergo as they learn their roles in terms of supervision exerted by the teacher. They deny that any supervision, in the formal sense, occurs. One teacher (Hull center) and two teachers (Jefferson center) refer to informal supervision and other teachers in our sample think of their relationship to aides as one of "mutual consultation," that is, teacher and aide jointly review each day's activities and events and plan for the next day on the basis of their independant experiences and observations in the classroom.

Aides are socialized into their roles and activities mainly on the basis of watching teachers guide arts and crafts activities and teach academic skills and modeling themselves after the teachers. A minimum of abstract verbal explanation on the part of teachers, for instance, explaining the meaning of different areas and the benefits children derive from them, accompanies this learning process.

Some reverse socialization also takes place: that is, a teacher may learn from her aide competencies which she does not possess: cooking skills (Jefferson center), how to handle disruptive children (Hull center), how to deal with fatherless children (Adams center).

Whether or not the teacher aide performs a role as intermediary between teacher and parents varies across centers and within a particular center. Thus teacher aides at Hull center are said to bridge the communication gap between teacher and parent: they are considered more knowledgeable about families and are a source of information for teachers, they are deemed more sensitive to parent concerns; one aide is considered more sensitive to children, the other aide transcends the language barrier between some parents and the teacher; and both aides are used to overcome misunderstandings between the two parties.

At Adams center, on the other hand, the aides, with one exception, are not mediators between teachers and parents, principally because they feel there are no racial or class cleavages between professional staff and parents and there is, therefore, no particular basis for rapport between aides and parents.*

Williams and Jefferson centers present mixed pictures. Each center offers an instance where the aide is a bridge between teacher and parents, and another instance where the aide has no such function. At Jefferson center, in the instance where the aide eases communication between teacher and parents, the teacher expresses some reservations about the fuller use of the aide as intermediary: to prevent possible "misunderstandings" by parents, she does not allow her aide to interpret the educational program to them. This, added to the uncertainty about whether a bridging function occurs in the instance where the aide affirms it and her teacher denies it, points to the unease with which teachers at Jefferson center contemplate the distance between parents and themselves and their ambivalence with respect to their aides' "bridging the gap."

All the teacher aides in our sample identify more closely with their respective teacher than they do with parents, and they see parents as perceiving them more as staff members closely related to teachers than (for those who are parents) as parents like themselves who happen to have jobs at the center. Furthermore, all aides claim that children see the teacher and aide as co-teachers and that they are interchangeable in children's minds or considered inseparable, as at Adams center where they are perceived as "Mommy and Daddy." The work identity of aides is thus chiefly determined by the treatment accorded them by children and by the perception parents have of them. In addition, the fact that most teachers behave toward their aides as co-teachers is a vital contributory factor determining the nature of the aides' work identity.

---

*Actually there are differences in ethnic and class status between professional staff and some parents and it is not clear why teacher aides deny them.

Aides perceive themselves as "helpers" or "assistants" to the teachers, but at least one aide, at Hull center, points to the problematic character of her self-identity: she sees herself as a teacher, and yet she knows she lacks the full status of teacher, as embodied in title and salary.

At none of our centers did the aides develop a sense of collective identity, as paraprofessionals occupying a unique position in the Head Start organization. No solidarity has been generated among themselves or between them and social service aides. With one exception (at Adams center), the teacher aides saw no point in holding meetings from which professionals would be excluded; they had no clearly articulated grievances which could be aired at such meetings, and they felt that they had too little in common with social service aides to make such meetings worthwhile.

As concerns the work ethic of aides, all teachers in our sample report favorably on it. Aides are described as dependable, responsible, on the whole punctual, conscientious and committed to their work.

The work relations of the teacher-teacher aide teams at all four centers can be described as harmonious and egalitarian. Respect, trust and friendship are expressions used by both teachers and aides to characterize their relationships. Teachers and aides evaluate their partners in the classroom in positive, if not superlative, terms. Aides are made to feel that they are vital to the operation of the classroom and are generally regarded as co-teachers. Their ideas and suggestions are welcomed by most teachers and incorporated into the classroom program. A teacher aide may even have her way in introducing an activity against the better judgment of the teacher (Hull center). The egalitarian ethos of work relations is also made manifest in those instances where the teacher aide sets an example in some area of her competence and the teacher accepts the aide's leadership (Williams and Adams centers).

Yet, despite the harmony of work relations and the absence of open conflict, sources of dissension exist at Williams and Jefferson centers, though these remain latent due to the absence of full communication or because of the minimization of the importance of these sources of dissension.

Thus, at Williams and Jefferson centers, teachers and aides hold disparate educational perspectives, the teachers all emphasizing the social-emotional development of children, whereas the aides stress narrow academic goals. Teachers and aides are either unaware of these differences or they state that the latter have no importance: each person has a right to his or her own ideas, each one can emphasize what he or she wants in the classroom.

In two instances (one at Williams center, one at Jefferson center), the aide is considered by the teacher to be too directive in guiding children in their activities. At Jefferson center, the teacher has, without success, attempted to have the aide moderate her directiveness. At Williams center, the teacher aide is docile and occasionally withdraws from the classroom in response to the teacher's criticism perhaps because the teacher has not discussed fully with the aide the need for a balance between too great directiveness and total withdrawal.

Teachers express some reluctance to criticize their aides at Hull and Jefferson centers, due to fear of hurting their feelings. Thus at Hull center, one teacher, disapproving of the speech patterns of her aide, especially when reading a story, could not bring herself to voice her objections until the aide, feeling that something was wrong, prodded the teacher to reveal her reservations. At Jefferson center, one teacher resents her aide's low participation in housekeeping chores, but she does not dare say anything to the aide, who is purported to be supersensitive to criticism.

In conclusion, the work relations between teachers and aides are on the whole close and amicable, despite what appear to be to them insignificant disparities in perspectives on early childhood education and despite the absence of open communication at two centers.

The work relations between SJ and BD at Hull center deviate considerably from all other instances of work relations between teachers and aides at the four centers. The teacher does not enthusiastically support the employment of paraprofessionals to aid in the operation of the classroom. Assignment of tasks to the aide is rigid, limited and often inappropriate. Often the aide has nothing to do because she has been assigned to a corner of the room where nothing is happening. She is excluded from planning and from setting up the room.

Supervision consists of formal conferences organized by this teacher, rather than informal consultation. The use of the aide as an intermediary between parents and the teacher or as having expertise on the community and families is firmly rejected by the teacher. In contrast to the pattern of identification prevalent among other teacher aides, this aide felt definitely closer to parents than to the teacher and believes that paraprofessionals have interests of their own which could be furthered by meetings among themselves. Also an exception to the work ethic which characterizes most other aides, this aide is not punctual and is described by the teacher as less than fully committed to the job. Work relations are marked by the assertion of authority on the part of the teacher and rebellion by the aide.

Thus, with respect to the limited role the aide plays in the classroom, highly structured supervision, rejection of identification with the teacher, poor work ethic of the aide and the antagonistic relations which prevail between teacher and aide, we have identified a deviant pattern of role relations which, though prevailing only as a minority pattern--indeed, a class of one--in the centers of this sample, may pertain in larger proportions in other Head Start centers or in elementary grades in public schools, where the employment of teacher aides may be less fully legitimized than in Head Start.

TIME TWO

The attitudes of teachers toward the employment of paraprofessional aides remained highly favorable at all centers. One teacher (Williams center) went so far as to question the validity of differences in responsibility, title and pay between teachers and teacher aides since she felt that paraprofessionals were doing the same kind of work as professionals and some of them were more experienced than the professionals.

There was no change in the division of labor, which remained egalitarian at Williams and Hull centers. Where there was some marginal differentiation of roles between teachers and teacher aides, at Time Two we found that this differentiation had become obliterated (Williams center, where an aide was encouraged to write progress reports on children which she had not been permitted to do at Time One). One exception to this general pattern occurred at Adams center, where a teacher aide felt that the new teacher he was working with allowed him less scope for responsibility and less of an opportunity to make decisions than he had been accustomed to at Time One and that his role had generally contracted.

At Jefferson center also, one teacher relegates most of the housekeeping work--cleaning, dusting, sweeping--to her aide, who appears to resent being placed in the role of a "scrub woman."

Supervision remained informal or non-existent at our centers (except for one teacher-teacher aide relationship at Jefferson center, where the teacher gives clear directives to the aide, who is expected to follow her recommendations). Supervision is described as really being "an exchange of ideas" where teacher and aide learn from each other or as "just like an everyday conversation" (Williams and Hull centers).

We can state that at Hull center aides have indeed continued to be bridges--conduits of information about families for teachers--they also talk to parents who feel uncomfortable with the teacher and relay parents' questions to the teacher; in one case the aide, who is Spanish-speaking, relates to Spanish-speaking parents better than the teacher does; an exception to this general pattern at Hull center is the case of one teacher and one aide, where no bridge is needed since the teacher is a neighborhood resident and works as a paraprofessional herself part of the day.

At Williams center, one teacher denied the need for her aide to serve as an intermediary between parents and herself and the other teacher related how much she had learned both about center families and the community from her aide--a pattern similar to the one we found at Time One.

At Jefferson center, our information about whether or not the aide performs a mediating function is limited to the relationship between one teacher and her aide. In this case, the aide indeed shares her knowledge of families and the community with the teacher, but the teacher has reservations about the bridging role of her aide: it is all right for the aide to transmit concerns of parents to her but the aide should not interpret children's behavior or the nature of the program to parents, because the information might be misleading: here again the teacher restates almost word for word the position she took when interviewed at Time One.

Work relations have continued amiable and egalitarian in most cases, and they have improved in some cases. For instance, at Williams center, one teacher reports that her educational perspective and that of her aide have merged, wherein the aide has come around to the teacher's point of view that it is all right to have many different projects going on at the same time and that there is nothing wrong with a noisy classroom. The other teacher pointed out that the different educational viewpoints held by herself and her aide did not matter in the least and caused no disagreement because the aide is a person different from herself and that she has a right to her own view of education--academically rather than socio-emotionally oriented--which she is able to implement when she works with the older children.

At Hull center both teachers and aides report on the harmony of their relationships and the openness of their communication. Aides tell of the fairness of teachers toward them, the respect in which they are held, the absence of "put downs" by teachers. In each case, both the teacher and the aide speak in superlative terms of their relationships. (It should be remembered that, at Time Two, the role occupants were different from what they were at Time One, so that we can only speak of continuing harmony in work relations with respect to the center rather than with respect to specific persons.)

At Adams center there had been a replacement of four out of six persons in the intervening period. The only teacher aide at Time One who continued as teacher aide at Time Two appeared dissatisfied with his relationship to his new teacher. He claimed that he felt more of a co-worker with his former teacher, that he has to accept a smaller role in the classroom and that the teacher appears to be little interested in his ideas or feelings.

Jefferson center presents a mixed picture. One teacher had left and her aide, now working with a new teacher, does not speak of her relationship to that teacher in the same glowing terms she had employed at Time One for her former teacher. Another teacher and aide speak of their relationship as a partner relationship and they appear to be satisfied with the quality of that relationship. They hold similar educational perspectives--both emphasizing the overall intellectual, emotional and social development of the child--yet the aide, in the teacher's eyes, is more concerned with behavior and discipline than she is. Although the third teacher and her aide appear to have no difficulties relating to each other, the teacher is the most authoritarian in our total sample of centers at Time Two: she states that she plans the program and expects the aide to follow her recommendations, she claims that the aide recognizes her as having the highest authority and that the children are well aware of who the teacher is and who the aide is. At Time One this relationship had been described as the least egalitarian of the three relationships at Jefferson center.

PART III

WORK RELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL WORKERS AND SOCIAL SERVICE AIDES AT TIME ONE AND TIME TWO

CHAPTER 8

WILLIAMS CENTER

TIME ONE

Chart of Statuses and Persons

GN	Social Work Director
EM	Family Assistant
IY	Family Worker
TS	Family Worker

Attitudes toward the Employment of Paraprofessionals

At Williams center, the social worker indicates some fear that paraprofessionals may eventually replace professionals: "Head Start may say workers can do the professional's job, but nothing substitutes for training and experience. Workers are good as aides to the social worker." For instance, she thinks that many tasks can be performed by paraprofessionals, such as collecting information on families, but that she "must take over where correspondence is concerned with other professional agencies." She adds that "paraprofessionals make a great contribution and are here to stay....It's not lowering social work standards, as long as they are supervised and get some training."

Role Allocation

The social worker performs core tasks--psychological counseling of parents, work with multi-problem families, development of community resources--which she does not delegate to the social service staff and she is freed from tasks which she does not consider to be "professional" in nature--recruitment of children and families, clerical work, accompanying children to the hospital for medical screening, etc. The roles of family worker and family assistant are not differentiated. The family assistant "does the job of workers," says the administrative director, "whereas she should be supervising." There is a great deal of overlap between the roles of family assistant and family worker: As the social worker puts it, "They do the medical program together, home visiting, record writing."

The social worker appears to emphasize the casework aspect of her role to the neglect of group work. As the administrative director puts it, her role should include working with parents as a group, getting them to participate in community programs, informing them on public issues. The parents' personal lives would be affected by their participation in changing institutions as well as by the individual problem-solving presently carried out by the social worker. As of the time of interviewing, the administrative director contemplated hiring a person to deal with the group work and community organization components of the social work role, heretofore neglected by the social worker.

There appears to be some resentment on the part of social service staff of the quality of "jack-of-all-trades" inherent in the definition of their roles. As a family worker puts it: "I cook, I take over a class, I work where I'm needed....The job is not clearly defined....I would like more of a routine every day, what's expected of me. There's no day-to-day schedule. You never know what you're going to do....You get called and something is added..."

Socialization into Work Role

Social service staff had been given no orientation to their roles by the social worker or central administrative staff. As one family worker says, "People are not told enough about what's expected of them." A new family worker was instructed only by the family assistant or other family worker. At a later time, the former, in turn, by virtue of her seniority, provided some orientation to the job for a new family worker. Thus, role induction is carried out through peer socialization rather than through orientation by professionals.

The administrative director deplores the poor supervision of social service staff by the social worker, which she contrasts with the excellent supervision of teacher aides by teachers. This she explains, and excuses in part, by pointing to the scattered premises of the delegate agency, which make it difficult properly to supervise social service staffs at all centers.

There are no social service staff group conferences and the social worker states that supervision takes the form of individual conferences, often initiated by an aide. However, social service staff are reluctant to call the social worker on the telephone when they think the matter "is not important enough to bother," so that individual conferences are infrequent. On the whole, social service staff carry out their activities using their own initiative and with little consultation with the social worker.

Although the social worker insists that social service staff should get training, for instance, in record writing and learning how to use and teach parents to use community resources (hospitals, legal services, job training programs), we have no indication that systematic training is being offered to staff through regular inservice training conferences. Undoubtedly, some training on an individual basis occurs, but it is not systematic group training. The administrative director indicates that there are many skills which the social worker could impart to her staff, but that professionals in general ought themselves to be trained about how to carry out teamwork and especially how to supervise and train paraprofessionals.

As far as extra-mural training of social service staff is concerned, such as the courses which are offered at New York University, she thinks that staff cannot apply the newly-learned principles and skills if the professional with whom they work is not knowledgeable about what they have learned and has not gone through the training herself. That training at NYU appears to be irrelevant to role performance at the center is assorted by a family worker who says:

"I can't use NYU ideas at the center. Central staff says NYU is only a school and you're back at work now." Thus, two suggestions she made about possible parent activities, which were stimulated by her inservice training, were turned down by the social worker.

The Paraprofessional as a Bridge Between Professionals and Parents

A family worker, IY, asserts that the professional social worker's methods "don't work" for this population. The social worker "has been taught in school a way to do things...she lives by it." This family worker, on the other hand, tells the social worker that she "knows how parents feel and must do things in a particular way," based on her feel of what the parents are like and her own knowledge of backgrounds and problems. That lay socialization may better prepare staff how to relate to a clientele from which they derive, is acknowledged by the social worker who leaves the ways of relating to parents to the staff's discretion.

At this center, family worker IY is the best exponent of the bridging function of paraprofessionals. She thinks of herself as a go-between between parents and professional staff: Thus, she lets the social worker know why parents fail to show up for meetings, what parents' needs are; and, similarly, she explains to parents "why teachers do things a certain way," what professional staff can do for them and help them achieve, what OEO, the funding agency, expects of them.

She feels that paraprofessionals can reach parents better than professionals: They can find out "the deep part" of parents' feelings and attitudes. She would like parents to see her, not as a social service aide, but as a friend: She talks to parents "as if learning to be friends," thus inducing parents to relax and to make personal confidences to her. Thus, IY generalizes, contrasting the social worker's behavior with that of social service staff: "Social workers are cold....Family staff are closer to parents, warmer." Parents invite IY to their homes for dinner, but not the social worker: "I seem on the same level with parents. Parents are afraid the social worker is above them."

The social service staff obviously perform a cathartic function for parents, who can "let off steam" with them and they constitute the first line of service. When problems require professional expertise, parents are referred to the social worker, who can counsel them or act as an advocate with bureaucratic organizations such as the Department of Social Services and the Housing Authority.

Identification Patterns

Social service staff describe themselves as being closer to parents than to the social worker. One family worker, TS, sees herself not so much as an assistant to the social worker as helping to run the center with the assistance of parents. The other family worker, IY, strongly identifies with parents. She shows her empathy for them when she resonates with their "apathy" about coming to meetings, with their reluctance to be visited too often at home by social service staff. Thus, she states that she herself does not like meetings, nor would she like frequent home visits. In the latter case, she actually reduced the number of home visits the social worker expected her to make, thus showing her identification with parents and her distance from the social worker.

The social worker complains about the "over-identification" of paraprofessionals with parents: Some identification is to be expected and, indeed, is necessary for an optimal level of relatedness, yet "getting too chummy and too involved gets in the way of doing their jobs."

None of the social service staff members appears to have cultivated an autonomous paraprofessional identity, as evidenced in the lack of enthusiasm for the organization of meetings for paraprofessionals only.

Work Ethic

The social worker at this center complains of her staff's poor work habits. They arrive late in the morning, take long lunches, sit around doing nothing and do not follow recommendations. On payday they are permitted to go to the bank and may be gone all day. Although the center is supposed to phone attendance to central headquarters, the person calling may "cover up" for late people. The social worker bewails the "unstructured situation" where social service staff, who are given "too much freedom," take advantage. Thus, as the administrative director says, "Another agency would not be sympathetic" to the problems which make punctuality difficult and, if Head Start is to be a training ground for entry into other jobs, it should insist on high standards of work performance.

Work Relations Between Social Worker and Social Service Aides

There appears to be much resistance on the part of social service staff to professional authority, although the social worker is not aware of the tensions in work relations. Thus, she states that she is "not resented" by the social service staff, that she treats them well and criticizes them "kindly and gently." The family workers, on the other hand, avoid contact with her as much as possible --they do not call her up if they are unsure of how to proceed, but rather talk the problem over among themselves or with the family assistant.

One family worker, TS, complains that when the social worker wants something done (for example, weekly reports on social service staff activities, medical records on children), she "yells" and "stays on your back until you've done it for her." This family worker, furthermore, states that there have been no positive outcomes from her relations with the social worker: "She didn't teach me anything; she hasn't shown me anything." This family worker, as the chronic latecomer, particularly resents the social worker's telephoning the center to find out who is late, who is not back from lunch, etc.

Social service staff also resent the felt lack of appreciation for their work. For instance, the family workers feel that although they do what they can to involve as many parents as possible in activities and meetings, still they cannot satisfy the social worker's demands that still more parents be involved. As IY puts it: "The worst problem is parent participation. 'Top brass' insists too much that parents participate, they push too much..." The burden of parent participation is thus placed by the social worker on the social service staff, who are not able to produce the desired outcome, and indeed have received little active support for such efforts. They are also unable to communicate to "our bosses," through their weekly reports, all the work that they have done during the week: "You can't explain on a weekly sheet all the time it took to make telephone calls and escort arrangements."

Another problem which the social worker perceived in the relations between social service staff and parents is the lack of professionalism on the part of social service staff. Thus, social service staff is not sufficiently impartial; one family worker, TS, who was especially insensitive to the requirements for impartiality, was finally fired. Furthermore, excess friendliness and over-identification with some parents was seen by the administrative director as a problem, particularly at the beginning of employment, when newly-hired staff must make the "difficult" transition between the role of parent and that of social service staff member.

TIME TWO

Chart of Statuses and Persons

GN	Social Work Director
SO*	Social Worker
EM	Family Assistant
IY	Family Worker

At Williams center, a second social worker, SO, had been hired since our first contacts there. She assists the social work supervisor, GN, by supervising four centers of the delegate agency and she specializes in housing and welfare problems for all centers.

SO feels that social work paraprofessionals play an invaluable role in Head Start: "I don't know how we could do without the paraprofessionals, truthfully, because many times they can communicate much better, and they do, than I would because they're _in_ and I'm out....They're a great asset to the work." At the same time, she is critical of the paraprofessionals whom she supervises: When they write records they have a "terrible grammar," they can't spell; they need a course in English.

She notes that there has been no change in roles for paraprofessionals over the period of time that she has been with the delegate agency; she is critical of the overlapping of roles between family assistant and family worker. The family assistant EM does not seem to mind this overlap--she tells the family workers what has to be done, she "works along with them and assists them": "We do it all together, we work as a team." She speaks of "guidelines" for the job which decree that family assistant and family worker should do the same thing "so they can replace each other." Although roles overlap to a certain extent, the family worker IY still feels that the family assistant is more of a coordinator and a go-between between central office and the center, whereas she is a jack-of-all-trades, performing duties which she resents, such as replacing teachers, the cook, and the custodian, when they are absent.

---

*New.

None of the paraprofessionals had developed a paraprofessional identity by the time of our second contacts at the center and, when attempts were made to unionize them, the majority of paraprofessionals at all centers administered by the delegate agency opposed these efforts.

No difficulties are reported in the relationships between the social work supervisor, GN, and paraprofessional staff or between the social worker, SO, and paraprofessional staff. Thus, the family assistant EM reports that "I can sit down and talk to Mrs. N," that GN shows interest in her ideas, although GN usually "gets her own way" in the end. GN also taught her how to write quarterly reports and has talked to her about furthering her own education. The relationship between the family worker IY is similarly characterized. IY reports that GN encourages her ideas and pushes her to continue her education.

IY sums up what she feels is the general tenor of relationships between professionals and paraprofessionals at the delegate agency: "There is not in /the center/ that feeling of the professional and the paraprofessional. We all feel like one big happy family. There is the closeness. We can go to Mrs. Q /the administrative director/ and feel we're talking to a friend."

As at other centers, the social work supervisor GN and the social worker SO criticize the lack of "professionalism" among paraprofessional social service staff. When a paraprofessional established too close a relationship to parents --for example, when EM related personal confidences to parents--she was criticized by the social work supervisor GN. SO states that personal feelings come out in paraprofessionals' work with parents, that they may not like some parents and show it, whereas a professional would smother these feelings, that paraprofessionals don't know how to cope with what is a "work-friendship" relationship. SO feels that a proper relationship for paraprofessionals to have with clients is the "detached involvement" which professionals achieve through training. On the other hand, she castigates professionals for often "not having feelings for clients" which paraprofessionals obviously have. In the end, she suggests that both professionals and paraprofessionals could benefit from "sensitivity training."

The problem of confidentiality in record keeping looms large at Williams center. Thus, IY says that she does not put in records the kinds of entries that are too personal, in case she leaves. She claims that parents have confidence in her, and not necessarily in the next worker.

CHAPTER 9

HULL CENTER

TIME ONE

Chart of Statuses and Persons

BD	Social Worker
NI	Family Assistant
HC	Family Worker
OG	Family Worker

Attitudes toward the Employment of Paraprofessionals

It is obvious that in social work the professional could not service the bulk of the clientele without the help of paraprofessionals. They relieve the social worker from performing a number of crucial, often routine tasks--recruitment, accompanying children for medical screening to clinics, filling out records, etc.--for which formal academic credentials are not necessary.

Nevertheless, while social workers require aides to help perform the work, the attitudes of social workers and center directors to the employment of paraprofessionals have been less than enthusiastic because the latter's work ethic, their general functioning, and their attitudes toward, and work relations with the social workers have all left something to be desired.

Also, paraprofessionals in the social work area have been conceived of as interclass communicators, who can transmit values and information across the "gap" between the middle-class institution and professionals, on the one hand, and the clientele, on the other, and who can bring these two classes of persons into closer communication with one another. Thus, the center director at Hull speaks of using paraprofessionals "to transmit neighborhood values to the program which you have to work with or work around....Paraprofessionals may be a bridge as to where and how one can move one way or another." "Yet," she adds, "this hasn't happened enough." Also, the social worker disclaims that a well-working bridging function has been put into operation; rather, she states that paraprofessionals "undermine" relations between the parents and herself.

Furthermore, the social worker at this center claims that her role lacks clear definition--she is not sure whether she functions as a staff member who supervises social service staff or who acts as a consultant to them--and she has heard rumors from Head Start circles that the social worker ought to function as a consultant to the family assistant who would supervise the family workers. Nevertheless, she is sure that the program could not be enacted without a strong dose of social work expertise, that the staff cannot function as substitute social workers and that, unfortunately, Head Start has become the paraprofessionals' program, in which it is the professional who feels out of place and not part of the Head Start enterprise.

Role Allocation

The allocation of functions among social service personnel is highly differentiated. The social worker allocates to herself the following tasks: psychological counseling of parents, work with multi-problem families involving contacts with a variety of social agencies, development of community resources, and supervision and training of social service staff. She does not delegate the above core tasks and, on the other hand, through the use of paraprofessionals she is freed from tasks which she does not consider "professional" in nature, such as recruitment of children and families to the center, clerical work, accompanying children to the hospital for medical screening, etc.

The paraprofessional social service staff at this center includes a family assistant and two family workers. The components of their roles are the following:

1. Recruitment of children and parents to the program.

2. Sustaining participation of members in the program.

3. Enhancing health and welfare status of participants.

4. Setting up an environment for social interaction on the part of parents: buying supplies, making coffee, "setting up" the family room.

5. Organizing parent groups in the center (acting as guides or advisors to groups of parents who form the policy-making machinery at the center and engage in recreational activities).

6. Enhancing parent-teacher communication.

7. Making referrals to the social worker when they encounter psychological, marital, etc., problems in parents.

8. Miscellaneous (babysitting, filling in gaps in personnel).

While the family assistant role is, according to guidelines, differentiated somewhat from that of family workers--she is to supervise the workers and to take an active role in recruiting the parents for social activities and the governance of the center--the family assistant has reinterpreted her role to her own satisfaction and it appears to be indistinguishable from that of the family workers.

Thus the director of the center and the social worker have defined the role of family assistant according to the guidelines as "supervision" and "group work," but the assistant refuses to supervise because she does not want to "boss" anybody and she is interested primarily in working directly with families and giving them services rather than in engaging in such "mundane" tasks as sending off notices of meetings and incorporating parents into the structure of the center.

We note here two facts: (1) the refusal to perform tasks allocated to her rank; and (2) the idiosyncratic reinterpretation of her role. Since she is functioning in a role similar to that of family workers rather than in the role envisaged by the director and social worker for someone in her position who also earns a higher salary than the family workers, it is not surprising that the two workers perceive her as like them in role behavior though unfairly more highly rewarded by virtue of her title.

That the distinction between family assistant and family workers in both titles and salaries is not matched by a corresponding distinction in roles is true also of Williams and of a center which was part of an earlier study (Progress Report, Studies of the Social Organization of Head Start, Document 2. Washington, D.C.: OEO, 1967). This discrepancy is resented by family workers in all these centers and alluded to apologetically by the professional staff (center director, social worker).

The idiosyncratic interpretation of role is not limited only to the family assistant. One of the two family workers, HC, has also redefined her role in the direction of "group work" with parents and away from the giving of services to individual parents. She likes to organize parents around issues--like the improvement of public schools--to get them involved in their children's education and to teach them leadership skills which can be used once they have severed their relationship with Head Start. She believes that not all parents have personal problems (welfare, housing, health) which must be attended to by social service staff and, as to those who do, she procrastinates and is only too happy to have these problems taken over, by her default, by the other family worker, the family assistant or the social worker.

Only one person, family worker OG, functions in accordance with the full panoply of her job tasks, for even the social worker (by training and by inclination a caseworker) prefers to devote much of her time to counseling of parents and neglects the group-work function of her supervisory role. Thus the social service staff refer parents with difficult psychological problems to her, but do not look to her for help with problems having to do with the recruitment and participation of parents in group programs about which she has no more expertise than the social service staff.

To conclude our presentation of the division of labor, we reiterate four themes: (1) high differentiation of roles between social worker and social service staff; (2) low differentiation of roles between family assistant and family workers; (3) resistance to assuming the full complement of tasks required by a given role and idiosyncratic redefinition of roles; and (4) conflict between two fundamental fields of practice in social work: casework and group work.

Socialization into Work Role

Since the social worker came to the job after the social service staff had been hired, she was unable to orient them when they were hired. Very little orientation appears to have been given by the previous social worker. One family worker, HC, remarks that when she asked the center director for assistance in defining her role, the director quipped: "Do I really have to tell you!" (This family worker had been the Policy Advisory Committee Chairman for some time and had, presumably in the director's eyes, acquired some knowledge of family workers' activities through contact with the staff.)

This family worker, rather than the social worker or director, was instrumental in orienting a new family worker, OG, who said to us: "I didn't know what to do when I was new on the job," and who thought that she was being hired as a babysitter for the parents. She complained that the job was never explained to her or a job description posted so that parents would know "who I was."

When we interviewed her, the social worker was working on a "guidebook" which would explain recruitment, record keeping, medical forms, etc., which she would expect the family assistant to apply in her orientation of new workers (two vacancies were imminent when one worker was promoted to family assistant and the other worker quit her job).

The social worker at Hull would like to have supervision from, or at least consultation with, a more experienced professional in her field. She cannot obtain supervision from the center director, who is an educator. She does consult occasionally with a long-time social worker in the counseling section of the delegate agency, but this has not become a stable consulting arrangement. She thus feels isolated, complaining that she "cannot communicate with anyone social work-wise."

With respect to supervision of the social service staff, the social worker holds weekly meetings in which the activities of the previous week are reviewed and decisions made as to "how best to help families." Unlike the teaching situation, where work processes are observable--that is, teachers introduce ways of communicating with and guiding a child which are visible to the aide and which he or she can follow, and the aide's actual performance is visible to the teacher who can thus better supervise her--neither the social worker nor the social service aides are visible to one another while working with parents. Thus, supervision is at a remove from the actual work process and is carried out purely verbally.

Also there seems to be some confusion about who should do the supervising. The social worker refers family workers to the family assistant to obtain help, but the family assistant is reluctant to supervise and the family workers prefer to bypass the family assistant and to go to the social worker because she is "trained" and "more knowledgeable."

One family worker, OG, feels that she does not really get supervised by anybody: No one follows up on what she does and she expresses a preference for an individual conference with the social worker as a supervisory mechanism. The other family worker, HC, states that she "hasn't learned much from other people....It's just sort of feeling your way along, learning as you go along, more or less."

Inservice training meetings are held once a week by the social worker for the social service staff. The social worker has tried various techniques aimed at improving the staff's performance: role playing, reading books and articles to be discussed at the inservice training session, having one of the staff take over the role of running the session. The role playing "didn't work out," the staff did not do the required reading, it is too early for the social worker to judge the effectiveness of the last technique.

The social worker thinks that, because of the resistance of staff to the social work principles she tries to inculcate and their uneasy relationship to her, inservice training should be given outside the center "in a classroom, lab kind of way." The social worker states that she is not able to give staff what they want or need because neither she nor they are sure of what they want or need to function effectively. (Note that this was expressed by the social worker after she had been six months on the job! The difficulties in the relationship between social worker and social service aides, to be made explicit below--see pp. 141-142--revolve around cultural value differences.)

Lay Socialization vs. Professional Socialization: or "Experience" vs. "Book Learning"

The social service paraprofessionals seem intent upon asserting the superiority of their common sense and practical lay experience over the professional's "book learning." One of the family workers, HC, emphasizes her experience in raising a family: "You can't knock down a mother's experience with four children ....Nobody trained a parent to be a parent, yet it's still a profession." Comparing herself to the social worker with whom she worked prior to the present one, she claims that that social worker should never have been hired because she had no children and was an older woman. Being a mother herself, HC "can understand parents' problems." The professional might have book learning, but "when it comes to practical things," the paraprofessional knows better.

The family assistant also asserts that social workers go by the book, and that they should spend more time with people, and should use common sense. Furthermore, they make an inappropriate use of the professional vocabulary: "Professionals use big words, they don't talk plain English." For her also, practical experience is just as important as academic training.

Nevertheless, some reservations about the superiority of pragmatic experience to professional training is expressed by HC when she admits that, though she has lived in the community for many years, knows everybody and is aware of people's problems, the professional has a trained capacity to put things in a perspective which is unavailable to her: "The director of the center is trained to be aware of certain things that even though I live in the community I might not see."

The Paraprofessional as a Bridge between Professionals and Parents

The most important bridging function performed by the social service staff is to draw parents to the center. Thus, the family assistant is praised by the director of the delegate agency for bringing the Spanish community to the agency and the Head Start center: "You have been like a bridge..." This recruitment function is facilitated by the attempt to match the social attributes of the social service staff member with those of parents. Thus, the older Puerto Rican family assistant is largely assigned to the older Puerto Rican women; the black family worker works mainly with black parents, and the younger Puerto Rican family worker works mainly with the younger Puerto Rican parents.

Because the social service staff have lived in the neighborhood for many years and know many of the parents "from way back," parents approach them more easily than they do the professionals. If a parent is unhappy about an aspect of her child's development or resents something the teacher does, she may approach a family worker, who then arranges a conference between the parent and the teacher. As family worker OG puts it, "I maintain liaison between the teacher and the parent. I am the middle person who brings them together if the parent is shy." The other family worker, HC, also puts great emphasis on her linking function between teachers and parents, and social worker and parents, to the extent that she thinks of this role as all-encompassing, to the detriment of other social service functions which have no bridging component.

The bridging role of social service staff is felt to be especially important because parents are reluctant to talk directly to professionals, since the latter are "outside persons" and the parents do not know them, and the social service staff have the interpersonal skills to relate to parents in their own language and in a manner which appears to the parents to be trustworthy. Thus, the family assistant points out that when she talks to parents she "doesn't act like a worker but like a friend or neighbor": "I talk casually and suggest things. I don't act cold or businesslike. You can find out a lot that way." Then she can relate to the teacher the information she has gathered about circumstances in the family which may be pertinent to understanding a child's behavior.

Family worker HC contrasts her own behavior with that of the social worker: "The social worker relates less well to parents than workers. It's more of a business for her....Family workers feel their way along. They live with people and know them as neighbors and friends. They relate to them on a neighborly or friendship basis." She adds, stressing the ambiguity inherent in her role, that: "Family staff know that they have a job to do. It's a business, but then again it's not as set up a thing as the social work."

Though emphasizing the social worker's outsider status, her "ignorance" about the families recruited to the center, her tendency to "apply the book all the way" and the parents' reluctance to approach her, the social service staff refer parents to the social worker for counseling purposes--an endeavor which they realize they are not competent to carry out. But this kind of referral, particularly on the part of the family assistant, is half-hearted according to the social worker, who states unambiguously that the family assistant, by her protectiveness of the parents, "undermines relations between me and the parents."

The social worker qualifies her remark that social service staff do not act as a bridge between herself and the parents by stating that she has gotten some knowledge from social service staff about culture patterns and values of parents from different ethnic groups as well as knowledge about the community.

Identification Patterns

Social service staff, in contrast with teaching staff, identify more closely with parents than they do with other staff members, especially the social worker. Thus, the family worker HC claims that parents see her more as a parent like themselves because she has young children, and interests and problems similar to theirs. In her estimation, parents see her as a parent-activity worker--concerned with stimulating parent interaction and organization--rather than as an assistant social worker closely allied and working with the social worker. She, on the other hand, feels closest to parents because she is a parent and can have conversations with them about her family.

The family assistant reports that parents see her as a neighbor, rather than as a staff member, asking for assistance from her in such matters as writing a letter or filling out an application for project housing. They also confide in her "things they don't tell anybody." Although the family assistant thinks of herself as an assistant social worker (she has done casework in her earlier years under the supervision of a social worker), she nevertheless feels closer to parents than to the social worker. It should also be noted that when conflicts arise between the expectations of the social worker and those of parents, the family assistant is likely to ally herself with the parents.

Family worker OG appears to be in some ways an exception to the above pattern. Summing up her position she says: "I am still seeking my identity." Parents see her as a parent like themselves, they feel at ease with her and she feels closer to the parents than to other staff members. Nevertheless, she wants to be seen as a staff member: "You have to bend with the parent. If you're too polite the parent feels uncomfortable. But you shouldn't bend too much because it breaks the relationship. Then she's not looking to you as a staff person, as an authority. She's looking to you as an ordinary friend and this is the way she'll treat you. I don't think that should be, because you lose something in the relationship."

In her interaction with parents, OG makes it clear that she is also a parent so that there will be a clear basis for understanding parents' problems with their children, but she feels that she also needs a separate identity as a staff member "so that parents have more confidence": "My parents think of family staff not as part of staff but as regular parents. This is good to find out grievances, but to help them you have to establish what you are, identity yourself as a family worker." While desirous of an identity other than that of parent, nevertheless she does not see herself as a social worker because she claims not to be qualified enough to live by such a role perception.[1]

---

[1] This family worker, who had the strongest need of any on the social service staff for an autonomous identity as a paraprofessional and a parallel rejection of a parent identity, is also the only person presently enrolled in college and planning for a social work career.

Since OG appears as the only one among the social service staff to get along quite well with the social worker, it is perhaps not surprising that she feels that meetings between paraprofessionals from which professionals are excluded would serve no useful purpose: "I don't think meetings of paraprofessionals would accomplish anything. The social worker is needed."

The family assistant, on the other hand, whose relations with the social worker are tense, claims that meetings between social service aides and teacher aides would be worthwhile because paraprofessionals could express their resentment of professionals. Here the assistant is not so much setting forth claims for the validity of solidarity and self-consciousness among workers sharing a similar position, but rather seeing the values of such intercourse for expressing personal feelings about the professionals.

Work Ethic

In contradistinction to the work ethic characterizing teacher aides, the social service staff allegedly come late to work, are not dependable, sit around talking when they should be making home visits or writing reports, do not follow recommendations, do not like to attend staff meetings, and in general do not use time efficiently. They are also said by the social worker to be "not motivated," "not committed," and having "little sense of responsibility." One family worker, for instance, failed to show up for work for one week out of anger, according to the social worker, when she was not promoted to the position of family assistant.

The center director ascribes these problems to lack of supervision stemming from turnover of social workers and the part-time nature of their work at the center.

Work Relations Between Social Worker and Social Service Staff

In contrast to the work relations among teaching staff, the work relations between the social worker and social service staff appear to be tense and conflictful and characterized particularly by avoidance of, or resistance to, professional authority.

After a year at the center, the social worker is dejected and dispirited. She feels that the job descriptions she had formulated were not being used as guides to role behavior by social service staff; that the records they wrote were made up of short entries instead of full descriptions of what had transpired between staff and parents; and that over-identification of one family worker with some families precluded adequate servicing of those families' needs.

The social worker sums up her disappointment over the performance of social service staff by stating that all along there had been resistance to her training efforts. While formally acknowledging her professional expertise--social service staff asks for her opinions and advice--they do not implement her recommendations: "Outwardly I have all the answers; underneath it's not true." After many months on the job she says: "I'm still at the point of trying to establish a good, trusting working relationship with two-way exchange."

What are some of the sources of strain in the relations between social worker and social service staff? We may classify them into three categories: status incongruences; differing expectations about role behavior; and value conflicts.

Status Incongruences. There are several status incongruences between social worker and social service staff on the dimensions of age, residence and length of time of employment. Thus, the social worker is younger than social service staff; she is an outsider to the community, whereas they are long-time residents; finally, they have seniority over her, having been employed at the center long before the social worker was hired. These are all reasons why the social worker is less than fully accepted by social service staff.

Differing Expectations about Role Behavior. The social worker has set up guidelines for role behavior by staff to which no heed is paid, each person having interpreted her role idiosyncratically and thus functioning the way she wants to (see above, Role Allocation).

Value Conflicts. A principal source of strain is the conflict between social worker and social service staff over the appropriate perspective--lay or professional--within which to view parents' problems and to service parents. Thus, the social worker, despite her best efforts, has found the staff "unreceptive to social work ideas":

1. They "do things" for parents, instead of acting in the role of enablers.

2. They do not respect parents' rights to make decisions for themselves, but rather want to force particular courses of action on them.

3. They evidence inadequate self-management of feelings and attitudes:

   a. They are partial to some parents instead of treating all equally;

   b. They are overfriendly, not knowing the difference between a "professional" and a friendship relationship;

   c. In some cases, they are overjudgmental with respect to parents' attitudes and behavior.

4. They reject psychological causation: The psychological cause-and-effect relationship is foreign to them: Thus, they refuse to explore parents' feelings and also their own feelings when helping parents with their problems.

5. They do not respect the existing structure within which helping relationships can be developed: For example, they want to help everybody, including non-members of the Head Start community.

6. They overdo one aspect of the professional ethic--confidentiality--to the point where the social worker "doesn't know what's happening."

Although the social worker has tried to inculcate social work principles and attitudes in staff, her efforts have been to no avail. Thus, she attempted to explore a family worker's feelings about not wanting to become involved in a family's problems because she over-identified with them. The family worker used joking as a defense in the interchange and thus did not permit a mutual probing of feelings and attitudes. The social worker also tried a variety of techniques --role playing, giving reading assignments in social work materials, etc., to induce staff to adopt a more professional perspective. In all these efforts she was unsuccessful.

TIME TWO

Chart of Statuses and Persons

BD	Social Worker
OG	Family Assistant
NN*	Family Worker
TO*	Family Worker

At the time of our second period of field work at Hull, the family assistant, NI, and one of the two family workers, HC, had left; the other family worker, OG, had been promoted to family assistant and two new family workers, NN and TO, had been hired. The social worker was also to leave soon.

As concerns division of labor, the social worker was chiefly responsible for agency contacts: Department of Social Services, Catholic Charities, Housing Authority, hospitals and clinics. She was responsible for getting people on welfare, getting emergency welfare relief, securing homemaker services, etc. The family assistant also took some responsibility for agency contacts. The social worker also ran social service staff meetings and discussion groups for parents.

---

*New.

Each family worker was responsible for classroom committee meetings, at which they kept minutes, NN for the morning classes and TO for afternoon classes, they both did home visits to inquire about children's absence from the center and to discuss how the children were doing in school and they wrote reports on the visits; they babysat for children whose mothers were attending Policy Advisory Committee meetings or had emergency business to attend to. TO was also the medical aide, that is, she accompanied parents and children to a clinic for medical screening of the children, persuaded parents on the need for these examinations and explained doctors' procedures to them. The family assistant was responsible for Policy Advisory Committee meetings. Occasionally a family worker acted as an advocate in court, for example, she would accompany a parent and speak for her in a case where the woman was sueing her husband for non-support.

Here, as at other centers, babysitting was resented, since parents often tried to overstep their rights to the babysitting service by claiming it in cases where there was no emergency, clinic or welfare center appointment, but rather when they wanted to do some shopping or go to the beauty parlor.

The division of labor between family assistant and family workers was not as clearcut as the social worker would have liked it to be. Thus roles overlapped somewhat as the social worker BD noted when she said that the family assistant OG performed tasks that the family workers should do (such as helping them with minutes of meetings and record keeping).

Orientation, when they first came on the job, apparently was a sketchy affair for the family workers--not enough time was spent by the social worker and the center director in explaining all elements of their role and, at the time of our interviews with her, TO was still confused about her responsibilities as a medical aide.

A major focus of supervision on the part of the social worker and family assistant was record writing. Both family workers were uncomfortable with this activity, concerned about their performance with respect to spelling and grammar, and they appreciated the help given by the family assistant and social worker. As the social worker pointed out, however, there was no true case recording in detail, "where I could talk about how they are using themselves in working with families, problems families have....I just do 'practical working with staff': did this family get to the hospital, etc." Thus she stated that no case material existed which the staff could discuss, that there was no organized approach to helping a family through continuing contacts and that staff helps families only in crisis situations.

Weekly conferences of the social service staff were held in which the social worker attempted to have staff "role-play" various situations, such as a home visit, so that the "proper" approach to parents would be employed. When BD wished to hold individual conferences with each staff member as a form of supervision, they were resentful, preferring the joint conference, and individual conferences were dropped.

The social worker felt that the family assistant did not know how to supervise the family workers: she wielded authority in a way threatening particularly to NN, who had many personal problems for which the family assistant had no sympathy. Thus, the social worker BD felt that OG should "soften" her approach to people and be more concerned about the problems which affect the performance of her supervisees. The family assistant, OG, appeared reluctant to supervise family workers. She said: "It's not in me to supervise a person. I can tell them what has to be done and...if they don't do it then, you know, I can't do anything more." Since she was younger than the family workers she stated that it is not easy for them to take orders from her.

At any rate, BD stated that the lines of authority were unclear: family workers were supervised by the family assistant OG, by herself, and also by the center director. Family workers in this situation tended to reject both the family assistant's and the social worker's authority and to listen only to the center director, who has "absolute authority."

The two family workers reported that parents usually approached them with their problems, rather than going directly to the social worker. Thus TO said that she talked casually with parents "on a friendly basis," which encourages them "to be more confident with you so that they then tell you things they wouldn't if you weren't on a more friendlier basis." She thought that Puerto Rican parents in particular may be "a little afraid of being very confident" with the social worker but that with the family assistant who was Spanish-speaking "they feel more confident because she speaks their language." Once a parent had approached a family worker with a problem, that worker usually went to the social worker for help on how to alleviate the problem.

The social worker BD, on the other hand, asserted that there was no gap to be bridged by paraprofessional social service staff between parents and herself: she saw herself as relating well to parents and claimed that what she learned about Puerto Rican culture was from the parents themselves rather than from paraprofessionals. Yet, that BD had learned something from the paraprofessionals is undeniable, as in the instance where the family assistant "filled in the social worker on what she didn't know, for example, how to make applications to the Housing Authority."

Of the two family workers one, NN, was unsure of how the parents saw her and had no clear sense of her identity, stating only that she did not want to be thought of as a social worker: "I just don't like the term...the name of it, the sound of it." The other family worker, TO, related that parents perceived her as a family worker, not as a social worker, and this is how she liked it.

In her opinion, if she were perceived as a social worker, parents would be more formal; furthermore, social workers think they are superior to clients and TO does not feel that way in the least. Basically TO would like parents to see her as a friend rather than a worker and to show her "the same trust that they would show their friends." Neither of the family workers had developed a clear sense of identity as a paraprofessional: they felt that the solution of problems at the center demanded the full cooperation of professionals and paraprofessionals and they rejected the possibility of the paraprofessionals' meeting among themselves to air their grievances.

As concerns the observance of a work ethic, the social worker stated that one of the family workers, NN, "was out a lot" and usually leaves the center early, and that the other family worker, TO, had her child with her and had to look after him. Both workers "sit around a lot" and are more interested in the financial benefits of their work than in doing the job. In contrast to the family assistant, who is oriented toward personal growth and mobility, the family workers "don't see the job as developing themselves and moving up." NN in particular has not been helped by the job: she still has "poor feelings about herself."

As far as relationships between the social worker and family staff are concerned, one family worker, TO, was loath to express any opinions because she interacted very little with the social worker and claimed that she had only had infrequent experience with social workers in general and thus could not judge whether BD was doing a good job at the center or training paraprofessional staff adequately. She spoke in negative stereotypes about social workers as of the time she was growing up: they were "snobby and snooty"; "Social worker was a dirty word...they just had no feelings, they were cold-blooded." Her outlook on social workers became more positive later on in her life as she met representatives of the profession who seemed to care about her. At the time of our interviews with her she felt that social workers were needed in Head Start "because Head Start families are at the poverty level. Some can't speak English and can barely write their name. These are the people that really need the social worker."

The other family worker, NN, stated that the social worker BD was really different from the stereotype she held of social workers in general. BD tried to "put herself" in the position of clients, in contrast to other social workers who "put themselves into the position where they're better than anybody else." Speaking as of the time when BD had just resigned, NN said: "She'll really go on and be great."

The family assistant, OG, appeared to have a close and positive relationship with BD. The latter encouraged OG's ideas on how to help parents when OG consulted her about the next step to take in helping a family. OG also transmitted to BD her knowledge about the ins and outs of New York City agencies since BD came to the center from another city.

The social worker herself, interviewed just before she resigned her position at the center, was deeply unhappy over her relationship with paraprofessional staff--both those employed at the time of our first contacts and those at the center during our second contacts there. (She excepts, however, the family assistant OG from the generalizations that follow.) She had contemplated leaving the center already a year earlier and had stayed out of guilt that she might be contributing further to the already high social worker turnover which characterized the center before she started working there. She summarized her frustration: "I haven't felt particularly gratified about my work with family service staff. It's just been a real drag for me." She stated that her impact on the program had been minimal, that the staff was at the same level as when she first started working with them, that they felt uncomfortable when she called a meeting "to talk about 'social worky' things," that her role-playing sessions had not worked out, that family workers didn't follow her directions and that she had completely given up on supervision, which is why she was leaving the center.

Thus, the aim which the social worker ought to have in Head Start, according to her lights, was not realized: "My understanding has always been that the social worker, her goal is to work herself out of a job and that when she leaves ...paraprofessional people there should be able to give some counseling service to families and refer when they are not able to do it."

It is also possible that her unhappiness with the situation at the center may partly have stemmed from the absence of a professional social work reference group. As the center director pointed out: "Social work somehow requires--involves direct supervision and fitting into a pattern. Social workers are unhappy if they aren't getting this."*

---

*It should be noted, however, that the delegate agency which sponsors the center has a social work counseling service. Why the social worker at the center made little or no use of it for consultation purposes is unclear, although it could be surmised that the utilization of this resource might have reflected negatively on her feelings of adequacy.

CHAPTER 10

ADAMS CENTER

TIME ONE

Chart of Statuses and Persons

NT	Social Worker
VK	Family Assistant
FD	Family Assistant
TU	Family Worker
GI	Family Worker

At Adams the social worker expounded in great detail on her practices for recruiting paraprofessionals. In recruiting persons for paraprofessional positions only parents of children attending the center are considered, though none of them might be fully qualified. As the social worker explains, the Personnel Practices Committee felt that they should not go beyond the Head Start parent group to fill positions: "The job is for parents....Make the best of it."

In filling staff positions, the social worker has excluded such considerations as age and ethnic background. She claims that "people are judged as human beings." Thus she lists the following as ideal qualifications for the position of family assistant: experience in working with groups and individuals; sensitivity to individual needs; ability to keep a group "moving"; ability to make people feel comfortable, to help them speak up and decide what they want to do to improve their situation; spontaneity, ability to express emotions; eagerness to learn; commitment to welfare rights; sympathy to problems of the poor.

For the position of family worker she emphasizes: ability to listen and understand people, enthusiasm for the program, good mental health. Thus she has persuaded the Personnel Practices Committee, when hiring, to exclude from consideration persons who are manifestly "egocentric" or "paranoid."

Nonetheless, she does not think that it is possible to recruit persons who embody all the ideal qualifications, particularly as concerns the position of family assistant. She also undercuts her own ideal recruitment criteria by balancing the qualifications of candidates for a position with their "needs." Thus, jobs are given to persons "who need it most and can't get a job elsewhere over someone with more experience who can get another job." Also the position of family assistant, when vacant, is given to a family worker in preference to another candidate "so that there's some career," whether or not the family worker's performance has been satisfactory.

Thus, when the position of family assistant became vacant, the social worker felt that none of the applicants could do the job by herself. The position was split and two part-time family assistants were hired, both to create work for two people instead of one and in the hope that the two assistants would complement each other and perform the work more satisfactorily.

The social worker thinks that she made a big mistake in promoting one family worker to one of the two family assistant positions. She had over-estimated the family assistant's capacities: the latter's horizons were narrow, she had no patience in working with families, she was almost illiterate, she could not use the position as a pre-social worker training job and was not interested in pursuing a social work career. The social worker thinks, in retrospect, that she had overidentified with this person and wanted her to be successful to such a degree that she had conveniently overlooked her liabilities. She now wants to dismiss her, but feels constrained: "You never fire anybody from a program like this. It would be a political mistake. Some people on staff gave ample cause to be fired."

Attitudes toward the Employment of Paraprofessionals

The social worker appears doubtful about the value of paraprofessionals for the Head Start program, though she is well aware of the meaning that work in the center holds for paraprofessionals' lives. Thus she says: "I don't know whether the employment of paraprofessionals is helpful to the program; it is helpful to the paraprofessionals....This is a marvelous job for low-income women with little education and no job skills to find out what she'd like to do....It's an entry level job..."

She perceives their usefulness in terms of running errands, doing escort service and setting up coffee and lunch, but otherwise "My bias is I think I can do it. Sometimes it's easier to do it yourself." This type of denigrating comparison between her own role performance and that of paraprofessional staff came up repeatedly in our interviews with her and we shall describe it in greater detail in later sections on role allocation and work relations. The condescension evidenced by the social worker does not appear, however, to have been communicated to the staff.

Role Allocation

When speaking in ideal terms about what her role should be, the social worker claims that she wants to be "more of a teacher than a practitioner, except for serious personal problems of parents that require professional help." She states that her work should be to train paraprofessionals and supervise group work with parents, with some casework and referrals in connection with parents who have psychological problems.

However, as we shall see below, her training endeavors appear to be minimal and she is engaged much of the time in attending to administrative details. She also does the proofreading of the center's weekly newsletter. Her one clearly professional social work activity is to hold family-life discussions with parents and paraprofessionals. She also "goes around letting parents know I'm interested in what they're doing, such as sewing and woodwork, because paraprofessionals are also parents and they are so involved in themselves that they don't have much interest to give."

As far as the family assistants are concerned, one takes responsibility for the Policy Advisory Committee and classroom committee meetings, as well as meetings of the Personnel Practices, Grievance, and Finance committees. She is the liaison person between the center and the community: thus she accompanies the Policy Advisory Committee chairman to Head Start meetings and checks that minutes of meetings get done. The other family assistant works with parent clubs, such as knitting and sewing, does home visiting of ill parents, checks attendance in classrooms, makes visits to ascertain the reasons for children's absence, and is responsible for forming a club of parents who are alumnae of the center.

The two family workers take care of housekeeping, run errands, and act as hostesses in the parent room. They "set up" the parent room, shop for milk and cake, make coffee and lunch for parents and spend much of their time with parents in the parent room. Each family worker is responsible for a parent club, one for the gym class, the other for a cooking group. They may also escort children to and from the center and accompany mothers to clinics.

Escorting is very much resented by all paraprofessional staff members. The family assistant, FD, feels that she is being taken advantage of because escorting is not a "learning experience" and "I couldn't get another job on that basis." Nonetheless, she complies with the expectations of the social worker who "doesn't think it's a waste of time." The family worker, TU, also feels that "it gets to be a drag picking up children when it's cold. But I can't complain because I was told about this when I got the job." The other family worker, GI, also claims that escorting is the least satisfying part of her job and that the service is often unnecessary because there is no emergency. She feels exploited by the mother for whom she performs this service and by the social worker who allocates the responsibility to her.

The social worker is aware that only a small number of parents from the entire parent body come regularly to the parent room and to various parent clubs and she feels that family workers should be responsible for reaching hard-to-reach parents, but confesses that she does not know how to train them for this out-reach effort.

The family workers are enjoined by the social worker to make friends with parents, to make them feel comfortable about coming to the parent room, to get them to talk about emotional problems: "All the parents want is sympathy: they tell their story over and over again. If they talked to me I would work on the problem. But the mothers only want to talk about it. The staff has no sophistication about emotional problems, but they can listen." However, she demurs: "I'm much more sensitive to emotional pain than the staff is. They won't pick it up. I pick it up when a parent is unhappy."

While she feels that staff cannot handle personal problems of parents and that it is inconceivable that they could run a family-life discussion, she grudgingly admits that they can perform well in an area such as community organization, for which social workers (and she includes herself) do not have much training in school. "This is the easiest area where nonprofessionals can take over. It doesn't take much social work skill to organize a meeting and run it with an agenda and Roberts' Rules of Order." However, she adds: "A nonprofessional cannot do as good a job as a professional. I do a better job than my nonprofessional staff does."

While she relegates family workers to relatively menial tasks, she is not occasionally averse to performing these herself in order to diminish the social distance--which is implied by the extant division of labor--between herself and staff. Thus, she gets involved in making lunch for parents "out of the need to let family workers know that not all dirty work is piled on them....I help with coffee and lunch and escort service because I hate to have anyone feel that there is a great caste distinction and that God forbid I should dirty my hands with coffee. I do it to be a good sport." Her ideal social-worker self, however, questions this use of her time: "That isn't a very good allocation of responsibility. I'm not sure I should be doing things like that."

The use of time is also a problem for social service staff. As the social worker comments, "A lot of things are make-work. It's hard to keep them busy. There's not that much to do. There are only ten mothers in the parent room."

Socialization into Work Role

The social worker's efforts to provide socialization for paraprofessionals pertaining to the performance of their roles appear to be scanty. No orientation was provided for new staff, who were enjoined "to listen, see what's going on, get the feel of it." Some staff members received job descriptions when they were hired, some did not. Family worker GI suffered from role confusion at the beginning: "At first I was confused, I didn't know what to do, what was expected of me. I got an idea of my work as I went along." This family worker was told by the social worker that "The longer you are on the job the more you'll know. It's a learn-as-you-go job."

There is no formal supervision to speak of, the social worker claiming that it is hard to find time for staff conferences and that there is no space to sit down and talk. She partially attributes her failure to get the social service staff together at set times to her open-door policy, which implies interruptions, parents walking in at any time, etc. She practices informal, individual supervision; for instance, she discusses parent meetings with the family assistant responsible for setting these up and keeping track of their progress. This type of supervision comes naturally to her: "I enjoy having paraprofessionals coming to me for advice."

Social service staff also state that it is difficult for all of them to get together with the social worker because there are always interruptions. If a problem arises in the course of their work they can always "grab" the social worker for a few minutes and have a "mini-conference" with her. Social service staff appear to be satisfied with the minimal supervision practiced by the social worker. Thus family assistant FD speaks of the social worker's "gentle supervision," her receptivity to FD's opinions and her tendency to make suggestions rather than to give orders. Family worker GI states that the social worker "doesn't say: 'You do this' and 'you do that.' She lets us work things out among ourselves...like who goes to Policy Advisory Committee meetings."

The social worker is aware that she should provide more formal supervision as well as training. She claims that she does not know how to allocate tasks, that she does not know how to train paraprofessionals in techniques for drawing hard-to-reach parents to the center. She is not certain what kind of training paraprofessionals should receive since "they are not sophisticated enough to get the training graduate students get." Thus, as problems come up in their work she discusses them with her staff on an informal, individual, ad hoc basis: "They learn by doing." That she is not satisfied with this mode of supervision is evidenced by her comment that "most of my problems are really mine. They are receptive, cooperative, enthusiastic."

Yet three out of four social service staff members claim to have improved their role performance as a result of the social worker's supervision or training. Family assistant VK learned how to evaluate a parent group activity and how "to recognize mental states in individuals." Family assistant FD learned how to listen to parents and be sympathetic. Family worker TU was taught by the social worker how to handle a class committee meeting in which a parent monopolized the proceedings. Only family worker GI appears to have derived no benefits from her contacts with the social worker and she voiced her disappointment in the latter's almost non-existent training efforts.

The Paraprofessional as a Bridge Between Professionals and Parents

The social worker denies that paraprofessionals fulfill a bridging function between the clientele and herself: "I think that a good professional with training does a much better job than a nonprofessional. The paraprofessional is supposed to be a link between the social worker and the client, assuming there is a great deal of social distance between the educated professional and the poor client. But a good professional can establish a relationship with any client."

Nonetheless, the social worker's rejection of a bridging function for paraprofessionals is limited by some qualifications: "The only thing that the paraprofessional does that the professional doesn't is the intimacy, friendship relationship. I am nobody's friend, I cultivate a social worker role. I can't have 50 friends. If I have one, there would be jealousy, favoritism..." While she appears to underline the different quality of the paraprofessional-parent relationship, as contrasted with her own relationship to parents, she denies that this relationship is conducive to the solution of parent problems: "Some parents feel more comfortable discussing intimate problems with a friend than with a professional. But once paraprofessionals receive the confidence they are not able to do anything about it, they are not able to help. They are usually floored: 'What do I do now?'" Thus, the social worker tells the social service aides to encourage parents to go to her: "Sooner or later parents have to come to me with problems."

The social worker admits that paraprofessionals transmit some of the concerns and preoccupations of parents to her. They have helped her to understand "how terribly important Head Start is to parents." They have also made clear to her how seriously they take the Christmas holiday, thus making salient to her the differences between her life style, on the one hand, and the life style of paraprofessionals and parents, on the other. But in acquiring knowledge about families and the community, the social worker claims that she learns as much directly from parents as from staff, thereby downgrading once again the bridging role of paraprofessionals: "My staff are parents with whom I have a slightly different relationship." And she adds: "The paraprofessionals at the center are part of the social group of parents, so they can't be as objective and sophisticated /as the social worker/."

Only one family worker, TU, saw herself occasionally functioning as an intermediary between parents and the social worker. She relates that the lack of success of the social worker in reaching a mother, who never came to the center, induced her to call on the assistance of the family worker: "If you call her, being you're a mother here and you have a child, she would listen to you." TU also points out that parents feel more at ease talking to social service staff, who are also parents in the program. Any problems parents have are eventually related to the social worker, who then takes over.

The other members of the social service staff deny performing a bridging function. Thus, family assistant VK says of the social worker: "She's teaching me so much. I can't really objectively think of anything that I have contributed to her knowledge about the community....Although she lives in a beautiful apartment she is able to sympathize with the poor." If parents approach VK to talk about their problems she refers them immediately to the social worker, voicing her ignorance about how she could be helpful to them.

Family assistant FD explicitly rejects a mediating role: "The family assistant should not run back and forth between a parent and the social worker. She should train parents to be able to talk to the social worker and the social worker to talk to parents." However, she claims that social service staff who get along with the social worker may have "a good effect" on the relationship between parents and the social worker because, unlike some centers were social worker/social service staff relations are poor, they "don't pass a feeling of mistrust to parents." Furthermore, she claims that the interpersonal style of paraprofessionals may be more appropriate with respect to low-income, little-educated parents who feel inadequate. Parents may prefer to talk to someone "at their level," whose conversation is "casual, concerned, not nosey," rather than with a professional person 'who acts exactly right, looks exactly right...and uses social work jive."

Family worker GI is adamant that social service staff do not function as intermediaries because the social worker is well liked and is an exceptional social worker: "Poeple just love her and she has no problem with the mothers." Yet, in another context, she mentions that some parents have come to her to complain about a teacher because they were hesitant to talk to the social worker or the center director. This she ascribes to her own lack of identification with staff, which makes mothers eager to confide in her: "Parents feel all staff members are for staff members. I don't act like a staff member and they tell me these things."

It can only be concluded from this discussion that some social service staff members occasionally fulfill bridging roles, although a well-formulated and legitimized mediating function does not exist and ambivalence resides around its acceptance in a context where the social worker and clientele appear to relate well.

Identification Patterns

According to the social worker, paraprofessionals identify with parents or with one another. No one identifies with her because "I never take sides and they don't think of me as a person because I always keep my temper." She seems to be presenting here her (desirable) impartiality and equanimity in opposition to the (undesirable) subjective and partial self-presentation and interpersonal style of the paraprofessionals.

The social service aides all claim to feel closest to parents and to be perceived by them as parents like themselves, although one of the family assistants, VK, entertains some reservations about whether this is all to the good. The family worker GI says: "I like /that mothers see me as a mother like them/ because, if they felt I was more close to the staff and Nancy /NI/, they would start feeling like I was sort of almost professional, like cold and everything, but now I'm just like any mother. And...they talk to me like they would talk to me if I wasn't working." Family worker TU says that "parents consider staff as their friends that they can go to with problems."

The family assistant VK has some doubts as to whether she should be seen as a mother who has a job, yet she does not want to be perceived as a social worker or closely identified with the social worker at the center: "It's not good that mothers see me as a mother. A certain degree of professional distance is advisable. It's all chummy peers, friendly, equal type of thing. I'm not necessarily authority, responsibility, someone to go to. They relate to me in a friend sort of way, not in a social work way. But I don't want to be seen as a social worker. I don't like the words, they have ramifications. People have inhibitions about approaching a professional..." Her uncertain identity becomes problematic in certain situations, such as parent meetings, where she is unsure what her role should be: "...sitting in a meeting and being both a mother and a staff, do I really have the right to get in there and tell my opinion too or am I supposed to sit back in the social work capacity and try to guide somebody else to say what they feel....In other words, do I have the right to say what I feel too...which your social worker isn't supposed to do?"

None of the social service staff had developed a sense of paraprofessional identity among themselves or with paraprofessional teaching staff. Two claimed that social service and teaching staffs had no problems in common that would be worthwhile discussing and that, even within the social service staff, there was no need for communication because each person was concerned with her own special responsibilities which she did not share with others. A family worker pointed out that "/without the social worker present/ I don't think we would know what we were talking about."

Work Ethic

This center is the only one where the work ethic of social service paraprofessionals was deemed satisfactory. With one exception, social service aides are always on time and do not make it a practice to leave early. The social worker, however, is concerned with the proper utilization of time under conditions of overstaffing: "The one problem we have is that there's not enough work for five people. I can always make work for myself if I want to, but there are times they're just sitting in here and I can't think of a thing in the world they could be doing. So we call that 'establishing a relationship with the mothers.'"

According to the social worker, the staff, while not deeply committed to abstract overall goals such as education, health or nutrition, are very much involved in the center. They care about it (for instance, they are considerably upset when something belonging to the center is stolen), they consider their interaction with parents in the family room as "like being part of a huge family," and all of them think about their work when they are at home.

Work Relations Between Social Worker and Social Service Staff

A problem in work relations between the social worker and her aides is posed by the fact that the aides, while they are employees at the center, and because they are also parents of children attending the center, may easily slide into the role of clients. The social worker seems to express some ambivalence about the center's recruitment policies. On the one hand, she says that if aides were recruited from outside the Head Start parent body, "I wouldn't have to worry about their families, I wouldn't overidentify with them, which is my problem," and the relationship would be a strict employer-employee relationship. On the other hand, the center's policy in hiring is to give preference to parents whose children attend the center and the social worker is fully committed to that policy.

In her role enactment she has to maneuver between the directive style which she feels is appropriate to the employer-employee relationship and the nondirective style appropriate to the social worker-client relationship: "When you're a supervisor you can't be so nondirective. Things have to be done because I say so, because I'm the boss. For escort service I say: 'Please pick her up.' Or: 'The parent room is not clean enough. It's not clean and this is your job.'"

Thus, the social worker speaks in terms of a hierarchical set-up when characterizing the social work component of the center: "One person should be in complete charge of the parent program. I am in charge." She rejects Head Start headquarters' notions such as that family assistants should supervise family workers (which she describes as "asking for trouble," since they all have equal experience and are all mothers) and that the social worker and family assistant should consult each other, since ideally the family assistant is an expert on the community and the social worker is an expert on casework. Her possessiveness about the social service component is clearly evident in her remark that

"The parent program is really mine and I make the decisions."

Yet she appears at times to encourage egalitarian decision-making on the part of paraprofessional staff: "I try so hard to encourage them to say what they really feel and they really think. I sort of wonder whether I wouldn't get more done if I were the boss and I told them what to do and we were sort of efficient about things....We sort of talk everything over and everybody tells what they think of my ideas and what they want to do." On the whole, according to the social worker, staff appear to want direction from her. While they often think that what she proposes is "social worker crap" they are mostly willing to try out her suggestions, though sometimes showing "passive resistance."

The major focus of discontent among social service staff at the center (as in all the centers in our sample) is escort service for children. The social worker explains her recommendations with respect to escort service, that is, her view of families who need escort service (such as those in which a parent is alcoholic, sick, depressed, etc.). But staff still feel they are being taken advantage of; they are resentful of both the social worker and the parent who is being given the service and they feel that the social worker is "too soft."

The social worker holds up what she considers to be a basic social work principle: "To establish a relationship to someone the first thing to do is to give concrete help....Everyone is deserving of as much help as you can give them. Help them until the relationship is established....Then perhaps they can help themselves. But they don't have to do everything for themselves. People are so overburdened that you should help them." The social worker would like staff to feel that they should help "with what the parents want," like escort service. She notes that it is difficult for paraprofessionals not to decide for themselves what kind of help people want.

Also, paraprofessionals wants clients "to get well right away and if they pick up a child one day, that's it...I've done it." The social worker comments: "This is a problem of paraprofessionals. You give help and the next day the problem isn't solved. They don't know that problems take a long time to develop and it will take a long time to work on them." Thus, one of the areas of conflict between the social worker and her staff is the time perspective within which to perceive client problems and provide service and the low tolerance level of paraprofessionals for clients' difficulties that do not fade away. In another context the social worker remarks: "This is one of the hardest things in working with nonprofessionals...to help them cope with frustration in reaching the hard-to-reach. They don't want to go back and back. If the aide goes to the trouble for something, parents should appreciate it, they feel." According to the social worker, the professional social worker understands the reasons of people who are what aides call "lazy"; she knows that if people are "depressed," they are "hard to motivate." As she puts it, "The aides are upset because they think I should be firm and 'you tell these people what to do and then they'll do it.' My philosophy: 'You can't make people do what they don't want to do.' I get hostility--'a social worker again'--but I can live with it because I know I'm right." Thus, not only is the conflict between the social worker and paraprofessionals centered on the foreshortened time perspective of the latter but it also partakes of the differential interpersonal styles and attitudes toward the nature of intervention in clients' lives.

The social worker would like to be able to train her paraprofessional staff around these issues, but she does not have the know-how: "Social workers don't know how to train paraprofessionals. I need help myself." On the other hand, she does not expect too much from any short-term training, saying that a two-year course in social work at a professional school cannot be boiled down to five weeks for paraprofessional workers and that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing."

She also tends to accept the chasm between her own professional perspective in judging and interacting with clientele, which is derived from a psychiatric paradigm (thus clients are termed "depressed," "neurotic," "paranoid"), and the naive, commonsense outlook held by paraprofessionals, which focuses on character traits (e.g., "lazy") and is inimical to a disciplined psychological and psychodynamic perspective. While she often attempts to control staff's gossiping about parents, which obviously runs counter to social work principles, she does not really expect to be successful: "I wish they wouldn't gossip but I don't really expect them not to. I talk to them about how destructive it is but I can't stop them."

While the social worker has occasionally communicated her way of categorizing and labeling people to social service staff, she has not attempted in any concerted way systematically to transmit her social work ideology and has not tried to transform her staff into carriers of the social work tradition. She obviously accepts staff as they are, feeling that they could change only through immersion in the professional milieu of a social work school. It should be noted in passing that the social worker feels very positive about her social work training experience at one of the leading university social work schools in the country, which may help explain her superior attitude and her skepticism about altering attitudes and behavior of paraprofessional staff who have not benefited from similar exposure to professional social work ways.

In contrast to Hull center, the social worker does not make an issue of her value differences with staff. Because she does not put pressure on them to conform to social work role expectations they are able to make a life for themselves which is less fraught with the tensions, resentments, periodic crises and hostilities evidenced in Hull center.

All four social service aides think that the social worker performs an indispensable function in keeping the center's program going. She is seen as taking care of emergency problems, as generally helping parents with problems that social service staff are not able to handle, as successfully holding family-life discussions that only a social worker would be qualified to hold, as being always there when she is needed.

Thus, family assistant FD states that "I don't see how they could possibly train a parent to do a job without a social worker around..../The program/ could get along /without a social worker/ for a certain period of time, like if she went away for a week...but for a long period of time I'm sure that situations would come up and we would have to run to a social worker." Family worker GI concurs: "I think the professionals really hold /the program/ together and really keep the schedule going smoothly. Because if /the social worker/ didn't come, everything would go down. She keeps the standards up." According to family worker TU, "The social worker does so much. She holds up the program, she helps a lot of people, she pushes mothers into activities. She's on the ball. The center would be lost if she didn't come in every day."

We should note that, although the social worker denies that any authority by family assistants over the family workers accrues to them by virtue of their position, the two family workers claim that they turn to the assistants for advice when the social worker is absent from the center and that they may turn for help to the assistants on routine or "trivial" matters which do not demand the social worker's expertise.

All social service aides mention ease of communication with the social worker as an outstanding characteristic of their relationship with her; they claim to have learned psychological skills and attitudes from her; they feel that they are valued by her--she listens respectfully to their opinions and suggestions; and some turn to her for advice about how to bring up their own children. Two of the four paraprofessionals do not admit to having entertained preconceptions about social workers, partly because they had had no direct experience with social workers prior to their employment in Head Start.

The family worker GI describes the social worker as being "very nice, easy-going, shows no anger, always has a smile on her lips." She explains that "Nancy /NI/ goes overboard not to be unfair to staff, putting too much work on them, especially dirty work like assisting in the toddlers' room." Her feelings about the social worker are such that she is tempted to follow in her footsteps: "Nancy is the kind of social worker that loves her job so she makes you want to become a social worker."

Family worker TU speaks of being able to take any problem or complaint to the social worker: "She asked staff to tell her how they felt, not gossip about it among themselves. It's hard to do because she is the boss. She said: 'If you don't tell me about problems I'm not doing my job.' She made me feel much better; I didn't have to feel embarrassed or shy. In most jobs you do your job, period. You can't complain." The following comment by TU epitomizes the feelings of all the paraprofessional social service staff about their social worker: "I think everybody likes Nancy. She's very easy to take to. She's the type of person...she wants you to be honest with her. If there's something about your job that you don't like, you can always go to her and tell her...and she'll talk it out with you. And we just get along...it's just great, you know, it's like a family really, it just works out very well."

The amiable relations between social service staff were also stressed by our observer at a social service staff meeting: she remarked on "the open and spontaneous style and atmosphere that prevailed; good will toward one another seemed to pervade the discussion and exchanges."

TIME TWO

Chart of Statuses and Persons

NT	Social Worker
VK	Family Assistant
FD	Family Assistant
TU	Family Worker
GI	Family Worker

The social worker appears to hold more positive attitudes toward the employment of paraprofessionals than she had when she was first interviewed:

> I think that if they're good they're marvelous. I don't think that you can make any generalization. I think there are some professionals who are marvelous and some who are perfectly terrible and I would say the same about paraprofessionals. It depends very much on the person. I think that in many ways paraprofessionals interpret the parents' point of view to the professional. I think that getting to know the parents who are paraprofessionals has enriched my understanding. I think I've learned a lot from paraprofessionals. One thing they do is sort of evaluate me and tell me how I can be more helpful and what I'm doing right and what I'm doing wrong and I find that very helpful and sometimes very surprising.

The organization of work among social service staff had altered somewhat in the intervening year: Work was now allocated to two teams, each made up of one family assistant and one family worker, who have similar interests. One team deals with group work, chiefly parent committees; the other team works on the health program and clerical detail work. Although the social worker had assigned supervisory responsibility of the family worker to the family assistant, she states that their relationship is more one of sharing responsibility rather than supervisory. This is (negatively) confirmed by the family assistant VK who feels that roles overlap, which she feels is not a good thing if career ladders are truly to be instituted, and that there should be a supervisory relationship between family assistant and family worker. The other family assistant FD also comments that "if there is a supervisory relationship it's invisible." However, family workers see themselves as "helpers" to the family assistants. They also do more escort service than family assistants and they tend to work more with parents outside the center (e.g., home visits), whereas family assistants are more concerned with center programs.

As far as socialization into work roles is concerned, the social worker still feels that she does not know how to go about training paraprofessionals and she remarks that there are no scheduled meetings with staff, each staff member coming to her individually with whatever problems she encounters in her work. The social worker is especially unhappy with having "to be on top of things all the time," "giving detailed instructions," "nagging them to do things like follow-up on an absent child." She comments: "I wish I knew how to help them develop a sense of purpose and a sense of persistence in their endeavors." She believes that professionals too should receive inservice training: "Most professional social workers haven't had any preparation for working with paraprofessionals."

At least one family worker, GI, feels that the social worker delegates more tasks to paraprofessional staff than she did in the past: "Nancy now trusts us more with things to do. In the past it was sort of like she did everything herself....In the past she would rather go and do it herself than tell one of us to do it. She realized that that was her problem." GI ascribes this change to the social worker's assumption of the directorship of the center, which left her no time to do more mundane tasks, which were assigned to social service staff.

Reversing her previous stand that paraprofessionals perform no bridging role between parents and herself, the social worker now states that paraprofessionals have "educated" her with respect to parent problems. She also cites the example of a parent who thought her a "phoney" and whom a family worker induced to go talk to her after interpreting how she saw the social worker to the parent and helping her communicate with the former.

Relations between the social worker and the social service staff at Adams have remained amiable. The social worker, NT, feels that staff are responsive to her recommendations, with the exception of the family assistant VK, who has a "negative transference" to NT and resists her directives. Indeed, VK speaks of her difficulties with NT on grounds that the latter maintains a double standard in her expectations of staff: one level of expectation for those with some years of college and another level of expectation for school dropouts. Thus, VK feels that those who are dropouts are not expected to function as they should and that NT's double standard is insulting and a "put down" for those who have not reached a certain educational level.

The other staff members are pleased with their relations with NT, with some reservations. For instance, family worker ZU is unhappy over the infrequency of consultations between herself and NT. The family assistant FD comments: "Nancy [NT] is very easy to get along with. She's not the kind of boss who's going to hit you over the head if you do something wrong. She's very patient." But she expresses some unhappiness over NT's style of servicing parents: "When a parent presents a problem NT asks them: 'What do you want to do?' People say: 'But if I knew what to do I wouldn't be talking to somebody.'" According to FD, this is "social work jive": "'What do you want to do, how do you feel, how is it affecting your life?' The social worker should give answers and alternatives." The family worker, GI, summarizes her relationship to NT as follows: "She is a very understanding person. Sometimes I blow off steam with her....That's because I'm angry and I use her as my whipping boy....I use her because she understands me. I like her. You seem to attack people that you like the most. And she listens to you. And she has sympathy."

The value perspectives of social worker and social service paraprofessionals do not appear to clash in this center as they do at Hull and at Jefferson. The social worker relates that social service staff "do not do things for parents" but rather they want them to do things for themselves. They respect parents' right to make decisions for themselves. Although they may be partial in their feelings toward parents, they do not act upon these feelings but rather treat all parents with respect and try to help all of them. Social service staff may be "overfriendly" with some parents, but the social worker feels that there is nothing wrong with staff developing friendships with some parents (she comments, however: 'Maybe I am unprofessional"). Staff are becoming less and less judgmental because they have acquired "a much better idea of the concept of emotional difficulties." The social worker has helped them to understand psychological causation and the staff have become interested in motivation: 'why people, why children do things." They have also become much more aware of themselves and their own feelings, although NT states that "they still have a long way to go." Finally, the principle of confidentiality does not interfere with staff's transmitting to the social worker, NT, what they know about parents: "They are very open. Probably they tell me everything, including what's said behind my back."

Social service staff confirm the social worker's perception of their growth in the direction of internalizing social work values. Thus, family worker GI learned from the social worker how to manage her own feelings, particularly when they are negative toward some parents. Family assistant FD has switched from a moralizing perspective on parents who are deviant in some aspects of their behavior to a psychological-psychiatric framework, wherein she accepts the explanation "the parent isn't together enough to..." (whatever the "proper" behavior is).

The difference in time perspective between NT and social service staff, which was so salient at the time of our first period of field work at the center, appears to have become attenuated: NT relates that staff are much more aware of the length of time it takes for people to change and to solve their problems.

CHAPTER 11

JEFFERSON CENTER

TIME ONE

Chart of Statuses and Persons

DE	Social Work Supervisor
KT	Social Worker
RU	Family Assistant
VW	Family Worker
LS	Family Worker
PY	Family Worker

Attitudes toward the Employment of Paraprofessionals

At this center attitudes toward the employment of paraprofessionals in social service are mixed: on the one hand, paraprofessionals help to get work done which could not be performed by the professional social worker; on the other hand, paraprofessionals are perceived as threatening to professionals.

The social work supervisor DE, at the delegate agency, in speaking of attitudes to social work, states that because "in the ghetto being a social worker is a negative kind of thing, it's a negative profession," and paraprofessionals provide services to parents which they would not accept so readily from professionals: 'More service is available than it would be if we just used social workers, because we could not get enough social workers to do the job, and I don't think that the families would be as amenable to working with social workers as they are with paraprofessionals. It's almost sneaky in that you use paraprofessionals to get to the families and maybe train them to do a professional job. And they couldn't get to the families if they were social workers....It's sneaky because they're doing social work, but they're not representing themselves as social workers."

On the other hand, DE feels that social workers harbor some resentment in sharing responsibilities with paraprofessionals "because they work themselves right out of a job. Also if paraprofessionals can do what professionals are doing, who needs them! There's a lot of insecurity. Social workers are very insecure people anyway because most people think they /themselves/ can do social work. And that's very threatening. I'm not sure that we have a secure enough body of knowledge that really belongs to us to feel nonthreatened when someone feels that they can do exactly what we do because frequently they can. And it's difficult to share this information with other people and to see other people doing as well as you can because you're working yourself out of a job. That's the whole point of this poverty program to work yourself out of a job. And it's a difficult thing." According to DE, therefore, morale among the social workers at the various centers of this delegate agency is low because their work is "self-defeating." One social worker reported to the social work supervisor that she was absent from her center for a week and that when she returned she discovered that absence had made no difference to the functioning of the center and that she realized that she was not really needed.

Social worker KT at Jefferson states that paraprofessionals can make contributions that professionals cannot because "paraprofessionals' experience gives them a real tie to parents. It's their community and they've experienced all the problems of the underprivileged. This is not within the framework of professionals: welfare, substandard housing, living in a crime area." The social work supervisor DE, on the other hand, feels that the very qualities which paraprofessionals bring to their work may sometimes be a disadvantage. She says: "Paraprofessionals bring understanding, what it's like to be poor, they know the problems because they had them." On the other hand, "it's not always an advantage because they may have the same problem as parents. It may look hopeless to them. This would not happen to a professional."

Role Allocation

The social work supervisor DE defines the social worker's role at Jefferson in the following terms: "I see the total job in the center as belonging to the family workers and the family assistant, and the social worker is the supervisor. She covers only when necessary, when the worker is immobilized because a family has the same problem she has. She should only do home visits if there's a particularly difficult situation which the worker can't handle. Her input should be on the training and supervision level." DE also perceives the role of family assistant as doing group work and community organization and that of family workers as being engaged primarily in one-to-one relationships with parents and casework.

But the actual roles of social service staff do not precisely fit these definitions. For one thing, work tasks are often assigned to or self-assigned by staff members on the basis of interest, concern with a problem, or knowledge of a situation. For example, an outside community meeting is attended by whoever is familiar with the issues being discussed at that meeting; or advocacy for a family vis-a-vis the Department of Social Services is performed by whatever staff member has contacts at a particular welfare center.

Secondly, the social worker KT is often involved in providing direct services to families. She states: "I like to be involved with people, so I take cases periodically, particularly if problems are in the area of welfare or housing." She also counsels families and takes over from paraprofessional staff when a referral of a family to a mental-health or other agency is indicated. Furthermore, she does not hesitate to perform more mundane tasks, such as escorting children to and from the center, which is officially part of the paraprofessional role, saying that no tasks are "beneath her" and that nothing is delegated to paraprofessionals "that I don't want to be bothered with."

The family assistant, RU, is in charge of parent activities but she also goes on home visits and works with individual families on their problems, families that she has known for a long time and is unwilling to relinquish to the family workers whose role, as ideally defined, is centered on one-to-one work with families.

Each family worker is assigned to one classroom; she checks attendance and makes follow-up home visits to parents whose children have been absent for more than two days. One family worker, VW, is in charge of the medical program: she takes children to the hospital clinic and dentist. The same family worker, who enjoys working with groups, is in charge of the parent sewing class, the alumnae club and the art class, and she plans for celebrations such as Afro-American Day. The family workers help to prepare lunch if the food aide is absent and they help in the classroom if the teacher aide is out.

The social worker, KT, as her role requires, supervises the overall center program--she passes on the admission of children recruited by social service staff in accordance with Head Start income and age criteria; she inspects medical facilities where children are taken for examinations and supervises the medical program carried out by family worker VW. She discusses with social service staff problems of parents which they have difficulty solving. However, she appears to be excluded by the family assistant from any influence on parent meetings: when she wants to attend a meeting she must get permission from the family assistant, who feels that "parents are my group." That the social worker, KT, should go to parent meetings has been a concern of the social work supervisor, who thinks that KT could do a better job of recording the proceedings of the meeting than the family assistant and that she would also have an opportunity to get acquainted with parents in other than a social worker-client relationship; however, the family assistant's possessiveness about the parents as a group has continued to stand in the way.

The social work supervisor justifies the salary difference between family assistant and family worker. She sees the family assistant job as requiring more skill, for instance, higher reading ability--"the family worker can be almost illiterate and make it"--as being associated with a heavier work load and as requiring greater availability--the family assistant is always on call at home. In the estimation of at least one family worker, there is no basis for the salary difference since the work of both is similar, "on the same level": "There's just as much to do for one as for the other."

Original OEO guidelines, according to the social work supervisor, appeared to favor a supervisory role for the family assistant; but this presented too many problems since there is often so little difference in background and experience between family assistant and family worker. Thus, they are expected to stand on a peer footing and all to be supervised by the social worker. Yet the family assistant RU reports that in the temporary absence of the social worker or in case of social worker turnover (which occurred during the research period at this center) she is held responsible for the work of family workers and has authority over them.

Here, as at the other centers, paraprofessional social service staff appear to feel that the escort service component of their role is the least rewarding. The social work supervisor, on the other hand, would like to instill in them the attitude that no task is meaningless: "There's always a thing at the bottom of a job description that says 'fill in as needed.' Everything can be meaningful, even escorting children to and from the center can have a real meaning in terms of a relationship with the child and...getting to know him as an individual or a product of a family. That has meaning. It's not a menial task."

Family workers also resent the large number of home visits that they are required to make--six a year, in addition to visits made to ascertain the reasons for a child's absence. The family workers are sensitive to parents' resentment of what they consider to be "snooping around" and "harassment."

Socialization into Work Role

The social work supervisor, DE, states that decent supervision and training of social service staff by the social worker is an absolute sine qua non for good paraprofessional performance: "I believe that with good supervision paraprofessionals can do almost everything that there is to do in the program in terms of working with families, but it requires good supervision and good training....You don't just assign someone to a task and leave it and then say 'now go and do it,' but you do it with some preparation and some ongoing training while they're performing it."

The social worker, KT, exercises informal supervision particularly around home visits, asking the staff to make them, going over their content with the staff, discussing parents' problems and how to go about solving them. She had started by scheduling formal conferences on an individual basis, but she "got resistance" and therefore shifted to the impromptu informal conference. She also holds weekly group conferences. She is wary of asserting her authority: "I know one thing I try not to do is tell people I work with what to do....I try not to come out with blank statements as 'I want you to see Mrs. So-and-So and talk about this and talk about the other thing,' because I don't think it would go over with staff." When social service staff do not take into account what she phrases as suggestions on how to work with a particular family, KT takes the family on as part of her caseload and works with it herself.

Two of the three family workers feel they have learned little within the context of the social worker's supervision or from training by her. One family worker, LS, relates that not only had KT not taught her how to write reports, but that "as a matter of fact, it may have been the other way around," that is, LS may have suggested a better way to do it. She also states that at social service unit meetings paraprofessional staff make more suggestions on how to work with families than does the social worker.

This family worker also draws a contrast between the professional's book learning as against the concrete experience of paraprofessional staff: "They say you can read about a thing....Until you have actually come into that place and live around, work around these people, then you don't actually have any experience about how it operates....You can't work with people on your book terms, you've got to work according to what the situation calls for. If the book calls for don't go there for two weeks and you find it's best to go there every day, you have to go there every day. You put that book aside."

The Paraprofessional as a Bridge Between Professionals and Parents

The social work supervisor definitely perceives paraprofessional social service staff as intermediaries between professional social workers and parents: "The family staff relate to parents that the social worker is a helping person, so that their image of her changes....The family worker says: 'Wouldn't you like to talk to my supervisor?' Her feeling about the social worker is translated to the client. You don't get that negative approach that you would if the social worker went in directly....The client seldom goes to the social worker directly."

She also states that because paraprofessionals are definitely more knowledgeable about the community than professional social workers they can help interpret the community to the latter. She also claims that the presence of paraprofessionals affects professional practices. Thus, about her own case, she says: "I've learned a lot from the workers. One of the things I've learned is that honesty, and I mean almost blunt honesty, is acceptable in casework practice, where I never thought that before....Things had to be soft-pedaled, you say it in a nice way. Now one of the things I've learned from the paraprofessionals is that you can be blunt. For example, you can tell a mother that her house is filthy and she needs to clean it."

The social worker, KT, emphasizes the role which paraprofessionals play as the first line of service: "...for the past thirty-forty years within social agencies they have been using professional social workers and somehow the situations of the people haven't changed, you know, that much. It could be that by /using/ indigenous leadership from within the community which I think...there is, I've seen a definite way that people in the community relate to my workers which they don't relate to me in that way. You know, there's a bond, there's a kinship, there's an understanding between some of the workers and the parents. And I'm looked upon as a professional person and somehow the people relate differently to community people..." Speaking directly about the black ghetto community in which she works, she says: "I think that...there's a move toward community control within agencies and I just feel that the people themselves are more responsive to people who come directly from the community. There seems to be a response that the community worker is able to get directly from the clients ....Even middle-class black professionals would have trouble." The family assistant RU corroborates the tenuous position of the social worker vis-a-vis parents: She states that social workers don't know how to approach parents and may drive them away from the center.

KT feels that the use of paraprofessionals has changed professional practices in that, whereas in most agencies professional social workers work directly with all clients, at the center KT knows only some families which she services directly and other families are known by her indirectly through the paraprofessional staff. The family assistant RU is aware of the dilemma posed for the social worker by the extent of her involvement with parents: "If she gets involved with families she does the family assistant's job, takes over her role. If she doesn't, she feels left out."

Two out of three family workers function as intermediaries between the social worker and parents. VW, if she cannot herself solve a parent problem, talks it over with the social worker and then asks the parent to come to the office where she introduces her to the social worker. After having gone back and forth between both parties and thus smoothing the way, she says that "the parent then feels free to talk to the social worker." She claims that in this way she "got to the parent faster" than the social worker would have and that the parent confided in her. VW feels that relations between the social worker and parents could stand improvement--social workers need to get "on the same thinking level" as parents for good communication to take place, so that parents no longer experience a "complex of talking" due to the educational disparities: "I think social workers are going to have to sideline theory and put in more practice....Social workers will have to get on the lower standards...they will have to bypass that theory, some of the things they're taught and have to get on some of the levels with the parents." VW also brings back to the social worker information about the families and the community, for instance, information about the extent of drug addiction in the neighborhood. She often consults with the social worker about agency resources, going back and forth between a parent and the social worker, relating the needs of the parent to the social worker, who calls up housing agencies or medical services for information, and bringing back the information to parents.

The family worker PY also sets up appointments between parents and the social worker, stressing the confidentiality of sessions to apprehensive parents, but she sympathizes with their view of the social worker as distant and patronizing: "I felt that I could really get more closer to the people than the social worker....I feel I was more on their level than the social worker. Some people feel that the social worker always looks down. And they don't open up to them." Yet she feels sufficiently unsure of herself when parents have serious problems that she sometimes asks the social worker to come along with her on home visits to talk to the parents. Like the other family workers, she claims to know more about the community than the social worker "because I'm in the community. I'm so close to the people that we have their children and their problems. I feel that I know more than most social workers."

The family worker LS appears to reject all intervention by the social worker. According to her, professionals are strangers to the community and don't know what hardship is, and cannot give proper advice to parents: "It's better if you live in the neighborhood if you're going to work with these parents, otherwise you're only looking in from the outside and you must live with it in order to understand what they're going through." As far as she is concerned, "The social worker is kept at a distance....She has nothing to do unless the family worker gives her something to do in an emergency." LS describes her approach to parents as follows: "Don't go in the home acting professional. Go on the same level as the parents. Talk about something you have in common. You get more done by being yourself, talking like you are a relative." On a home visit, if a parent feels ashamed because she is not yet dressed, for example, LS responds that this happens to her too and thus, she says, "the parent feels better." She adds that the home is a person's castle and "you can't just take over or try to rearrange her life," which, she implies, a professional social worker might try to do.

Identification Patterns

For the social work supervisor, DE, a major assumption underlying the employment of paraprofessionals is that they will identify most closely with the community and with the clients of the center. Yet it has been her experience that they identify more with the agency and the professional staff than with the community: "The worker drops identification with the community as she moves into the job. That makes her different from the clientele. She is now middle class..." DE is hopeful that ultimately social service aides will develop a dual identification.

Indeed, all members of the social service staff at this center state that they feel closer to one another than they do to parents; however, they also reject identification with the social worker. The family assistant RU relates that parents see her as a social service worker between whom and the social worker they see very little difference. One family worker, VW, is perceived as a family worker by parents, and this is what she wants since, if she were perceived as a social worker she would be on a more distant footing with them. Another family worker, PY, is seen by parents as both a staff member and a parent and this is how she wants to be perceived; she does not think that parents see her as a social worker, although she remarks, "I sometimes have the feeling that I am a social worker, if I can help someone."

Yet, despite being perceived by parents as paraprofessional social service workers and despite their feelings of closeness to one another, they do not act on their common paraprofessional identity. The family assistant opposes paraprofessional meetings as divisive. She also feels that too close relations between social service staff should be proscribed because friendship relations are inimical to good work relations: "I like unity, but I don't like all that buddy-buddy stuff." The family worker VW sees no point in separate paraprofessional get-togethers because nothing can be accomplished without the cooperation of professionals; gripes, she thinks, should be aired publicly. Family worker LS denigrates the possibility of paraprofessional unity on the ground that social service and teaching staffs have nothing in common to discuss.

Work Ethic

The social work supervisor points out that some paraprofessional social service aides never held jobs prior to their Head Start employment, that they do not know what it is like to hold a job, that they have to learn to come in on time and not to leave early. The social worker at the center also refers to the lack of punctuality of social service staff and to their sometime idleness: "They sit around without working sometimes."

The social work supervisor states that, although paraprofessionals, when first hired, do not evidence much commitment, "it comes with working in the center. It's kind of catching in a way." The family worker LS certainly demonstrates a strong attitude of commitment to work: "I don't want to go to a job just for the money. When I want to do something I want to do something because I want to do it. You're supposed to have feelings for what you're doing, not for the money..."

Work Relations Between Social Worker and Social Service Aides

The social work supervisor describes the ideal relationship which should obtain between the professional social worker and the paraprofessional social service aides: They should learn from one another those skills, understandings and perspectives in which they are respectively competent. Thus, she feels that paraprofessionals had something to teach her, that she learned a great deal from them about the community and its people, particularly as she had no experience in urban poverty work. She also realized, through discussions with them, that a psychoanalytic orientation to common social work problems such as the unmarried mother, with which she had been imbued at social work school, was inappropriate: The psychoanalytic point of view is "complete nonsense; it doesn't apply to the lower class." DE's comments are ambiguous about who learns from whom to understand human behavior: "Workers recognize that social workers have skills that they don't have and that they can learn from the social worker in terms of skills and understanding human behavior. But there are instances where they feel they understand human behavior better: they know more about the community and about being poor than social workers."

At any rate, DE thinks the social worker is advantaged in an important respect over the paraprofessional staff: she has the perspective from which to view problems and solutions because she is distanced from concrete situations. Thus, she says: "...the social worker is one step removed from the actual work. She can see things the staff can't see. I am two steps removed. I can see things the social workers don't. I am less emotionally involved, I am not close to the situation. So staff accepts help from me because I am removed..." Yet social service staff do not always follow her recommendations. This is not threatening to her: "They are free to challenge me, because they may know a better way to do it. Because I'm not always right and I learn a great deal from them."

Uncertainty about the distribution of expertise between the professional and the paraprofessionals and conflict in decision-making between duly constituted authority (the social worker as supervisor) and ad hoc authority (social service aides as experts on the community and poverty) characterize the relationship between social worker and family staff at Jefferson.

Thus the family assistant, RU, feels especially keenly the opposition between her need to respect the social worker, based on the office which she holds, and her condescension toward the social worker on account of the latter's lack of supervisory experience and expertise on the community: "When the social worker comes I look for her to know a *great* deal more than I do and be very resourceful, or she's no help here, no help whatsoever....Miss T /KT/ was *definitely* not a social worker when she came in here. I mean she did not know *anything* about the work. And I had to tell her and yet respect everything she said, whether it was right or wrong. And see, that's kinda hard."

After having been oriented by RU in her first steps at the center--receiving information about the Head Start program, being held back from working with a family before she had the requisite knowledge for working with that family, etc.--the social worker came to depend on the family assistant for guidance: before undertaking an action she is wont to ask her: "I'd like to do so-and-so...what do you think?" But the family assistant resists a permanent reversal of roles: "I don't want her to think she has to come to me to ask me. That's not right either." She is somewhat angry at having been put into the role of "teacher" to the social worker: "I particularly resent...when they send the young social workers, maybe just out of college, and send them here. No experience, nothing to tell me. And I'm not teaching any more social workers. I don't get the pay. I don't get the recognition. I'm not teaching any more social workers."

RU resolves her dilemma between according respect and the impossibility of doing so by partial withdrawal from contact with the social worker: "When they start bringing in an inexperienced social worker who couldn't tell me anything, this is where I begin to shut them out. I didn't disrespect them...I just shut them out...because they don't have anything to give me...I don't need their supervision....If you don't know, you can't supervise me....Because, you see, I could read and experience taught me more than they could tell me."

Although the family assistant often has the last word in disagreements with the social worker, some conflicts arise which are not resolved. Thus, RU was not used to calling a parent before making a home visit: "It's not a friendly call when you have to make an appointment....If you call parents they tell you not to come, they think of the family staff as welfare investigators....Miss T /KT/ upset the routine, she started the business of calling....I hold to the fact that Head

Start social service has to be a different kind. It's not a welfare social service and we have to have a different knack. I think that's where the social worker and I disagree."

But RU has had some influence on KT, particularly in the matter of how to approach parents: "I didn't like her approach to parents. It was patronizing. She identified too much with blacks. I sat down with her and told her. She listened to me and admitted her faults." Thus, although throwing up her hands at the inexperience of KT and unwilling to be supervised by her, RU hasn't given up on her entirely: "I think she would learn. I think in time she would become a very good social worker, but this /her patronizing attitude toward parents/ was something she had to overcome." RU claims that the family workers listen to her more than they do to the social worker and that she has more influence on them, although according to DE she is not supposed to do any supervising of them.

Two out of the three family workers see little need in the program for a social worker. Thus VW states: "I'll tell you really, we, the family workers, are really doing social work because we do all the contacting....And we solve the problem ourselves without ever calling the social worker. So, seriously, her role isn't as important as family assistant and family worker....We're doing more..." The family worker LS appears to be indifferent to whether or not the program has a social worker: "We get along without them and we get along with them." She emphatically thinks that social work is an everyday activity which can be performed by anyone and which only requires basic humanitarian values and she downgrades the necessity of a degree: "Well, actually, any form of social work, you don't have to have a degree. I think social work comes from your heart. You gonna help someone across the street. That's social work. If you can give a person some food, some money to buy some food if their children are hungry, that's social work. You don't need a degree to do social work, it comes from within you.

Because the degree doesn't actually make you do anything, it doesn't teach you anything. It only enhances, it only helps you to do better what you already know....It gives you more meaning for what you already know. And once you learn the basic fundamentals of life, you don't need a degree....You can go out with an eighth grade education and do the same thing as someone who's got the degree. You might not know how to write it, to make it look more presentable. /But/ tell it like it is and you find that you can accomplish a lot."

Only one family worker, PY, feels that the social worker makes a contribution to the work of the social service unit: She reads reports on home visits written by social service staff, she makes suggestions on how to write reports, she can give help to some parents (for example, to those with marital problems) where paraprofessionals are not equipped to do so. PY singles out the greatest asset in having a social worker: by virtue of her position and title the social worker is better able to handle relations with other agencies, to get information and make referrals than the paraprofessional staff--"The word 'social worker' opens a lot of doors."

The family workers VW and LS, speaking of their relationship to the social worker, claim that they do not know where they stand with her: They are unsure of what the social worker's expectations are because, as VW puts it, "She doesn't say you're doing good or bad," and she does not point out strengths and weaknesses in their work. LS describes the social worker as "secretive," "strange," "stubborn": "She doesn't let anyone know how she feels inwardly."

Both family workers appear to resist the social worker's authority in cases where they think she gives the wrong advice on how to work with parents. But their resistance is no more than covert because of their respect for the official hierarchy. Thus LS says: "If you speak up, you speak too fervently, you'll be in hot water. So it's best to keep your mouth closed. Because, like I say, when someone's in a supervisory position, I mean a level over you, they have more say than you, so....You know, even on your job in private industry you can't speak up to your boss...'I don't like you, so-and-so.' So some things you just have to hold your tongue because if you don't....You have to take as well as give."

LS resents the fact that a social worker was hired, who was inferior in experience to the family assistant: "Well, I think you shouldn't bring in someone that hasn't had too much experience in social work and put them in a position to be a supervisor when you got say like Mrs. U /family assistant/. She's an old hand. She's been here ever since Jefferson center started....It's hard to bring in someone new into that place and let them supervise people. You know, it's very hard, it makes you feel very uncomfortable." And she comments that "Mrs. U has no degree, but she teaches Mrs. T /social worker/, who has the degree, instead of the other way around. Mrs. U is more of a professional than Mrs. T, but she can't get her job. It's unfair."*

About her specific feelings toward the social worker, she says: "I didn't really look down on her or anything, you know, because it wasn't her fault really, it wasn't her fault. Because she said that she was a certified teacher. She didn't make any bones about it. Just that you get to feel a little uncomfortable." Besides rejecting the social worker on grounds of inadequate background in social work, LS also points out other barriers to effective work by the social worker: she is middle class and therefore knows little about poverty and she is an outsider by residence and therefore cannot understand the community and the parents as well as paraprofessional social service staff.

The social worker, KT, is well aware that her authority is being rejected: "I have run across the feeling /expressed by paraprofessionals/ that 'these are my people, I live in this community, I know the problems, I've known these people ...for a number of years, and let's try this approach.'" KT has tried to counter the weighting of knowledge about poverty and the community in favor of paraprofessional staff by relating to them her experiences in an interracial housing project where she lived while she was growing up. But this seems to have made little impression. She also ascribes her difficulties in working with social service staff to age disparities ("Most workers are old enough to be my parents") and to her low seniority in relation to them.

---

*RU received her B.A. degree at the end of the year.

Realizing that she cannot play the role of expert, KT encourages social service staff to implement their own ideas in working with parents and to divide up their responsibilities in ways that are congenial to all. Thus, she says: "I don't consider myself as someone who is very authoritarian with the family workers and the family assistant. They have a lot of experience and work well with families. They have ideas..." Yet she tries to exercise some supervision over the making and the reporting back of home visits and over the medical program.

Aside from difficulties in work relations stemming from structural differences in experience, socioeconomic status, residence, age and seniority, work relations are also affected by disparities in values. Thus, according to KT, social service aides' perspective on parents is judgmental--a mother is "lazy" if she is not a clean housekeeper--whereas KT perceives such parents as physically or emotionally tired. Paraprofessionals also come down hard on parents who do not participate in the parent program and are resistant to accepting the social worker's interpretation that parents have problems which have to be alleviated before they can be free to participate in the center's program.

Another issue which mars the relationship between social worker and social service staff is confidentiality about the information which parents provide staff. KT wants staff to enter this information into the record, but staff resist writing down what they feel has been told to them in confidence.

TIME TWO

Chart of Statuses and Persons

DE	Social Work Supervisor
AB*	Social Worker
RU	Family Assistant
VW	Family Worker
LS	Family Worker

While the social work supervisor, DE, at the delegate agency is positively inclined with respect to the value of using social service paraprofessionals in Head Start programs, she has some reservations about the kinds of paraprofessionals that are hired: "I still feel that paraprofessionals have a very important place in the program. In terms of communicating with parents, being aware of problems of parents, I think paraprofessionals have a great advantage over professional social workers. I think we tend to hire paraprofessionals who have middle-class strivings so that a great deal of their effectiveness is lost. They become different from the people that they were with before. They now have a regular job and they're middle class, they are no longer lower class. It's interesting that the parents choose people with middle-class strivings."

If we contrast DE's statement with the one made by the social worker, KT, at Jefferson center when we first interviewed her--"Paraprofessionals bring understanding, what it's like to be poor, they know the problems because they had them..../On the other hand/ it's not always an advantage because they may have the same problems as parents. It may look hopeless to them"--we are at a loss to determine just what kind of paraprofessional would be an advantage to the program:

---

*New.

She should not have "middle-class strivings"; on the other hand, she should not be too much like her clients--even though that too is an advantage. A view of the kind of person who would be the most effective paraprofessional is elusive indeed!

There has been no notable change in role definitions of staff since our first contact with Jefferson, except that the family assistant is no longer expected to do individual casework and home visits, but rather spends all her time on parent activities. Rather resentfully she remarks that her title should be "parent co-ordinator" rather than family assistant.

Although paraprofessionals continue to act out a mediating function, the social work supervisor, DE, questions their bridging roles between social worker and clients: "A good social worker doesn't need a paraprofessional to help her communicate with parents....A good social worker can communicate. That's part of what a social worker is all about--communication skills. Social workers have gotten a really bad reputation in terms of how they function. We've allowed ourselves to be allied with the Establishment. I see paraprofessionals as being used to do things that an agency can't pay social workers to do....I just feel it's a dirty excuse to say that we use them in attempts at interpreting the social worker to the parents or vice versa."

Indeed, the social work supervisor believes that after a period of working in the agency the social worker establishes an egalitarian relationship with parents:

> Social workers change a great deal when they come into the agency. Their way of relating to paraprofessionals and parents is...very professional....That's the stereotype: professional. When they are here six months there is a gradual change in their way of relating. They don't need to be the stereotype "professional." They can relax and relate to people in a much more relaxed, friendly, meaningful way. So that they're not so unapproachable....Parents feel: This is a person who cares about me, who's willing to be involved with me on all kinds of levels. She works

> with me on something we're working on together....And when we get professional social workers in the agency they come in with that attitude, more Establishment-oriented. They change. They don't need to be quite so Establishment for their security....They become more secure and I give them a great deal of support so that they can function in a relaxed kind of way and they don't need this formality between them and the parents, they don't need to keep this distance. The social worker can participate with parents in social activities in a working-together kind of relationship, in addition to giving them some counseling and guidance. They have a leadership role without maintaining the distance.

The relationship that paraprofessionals have with their present male social worker, AB (this is the third social worker at Jefferson in a period of one year), is charged with hostility. The family assistant's (RU) objections to the social worker are many: She claims that paraprofessional staff are well experienced, whereas the social worker is not, yet that he will not ask for help from staff when he is ignorant about a particular situation. As she puts it, "He sits at his desk and gives orders and doesn't know what he's doing....He does not want to lose his image or his superiority. He does not know anything about Head Start and will not ask." She says that parents as well as staff are dissatisfied with the social worker, that they can tell "phoneys" from their lack of sincerity and involvement: "Social workers have to learn how to work with grassroots people; they're not working with educated people or the middle class." She was apparently quite forthright with the social worker: "I told him 'there's an art to supervision and you need to get it.' I told him his supervision of me was wrong; I'm on a higher level than family workers and I worked at my job longer than did Mrs. E /the social work supervisor/." RU also feels uncomfortable about the social worker's being a male: "A man with four women, that's kind of hard. He doesn't want a woman to tell him anything."

She sums up her relationship with the three social workers in the period of a year as follows: "I'm not training any more social workers. They're supposed to know. They're supposed to come here and tell me something. There's not one who knows anything. I can tell them I want to follow. All I do is have respect for them. But there's nothing they can tell me, nothing!" Her dissatisfaction with social workers extends even to the social work supervisor: "I told Mrs. E /social work supervisor/, 'If you don't throw the book away and use your own mind...' She's thinking about what the book says to do with people. 'You may have an MSW but there are some things you don't know.'"

Two family workers at the center also indicated some unhappiness with the social worker. LS said that she learned nothing from him, that he sits behind his desk and does not go to the field, that he is unfriendly and cold, that he acts as though paraprofessional staff knew nothing, and that a man does not fit into an all-female social service group. The family worker VW also notes that paraprofessional staff know the center families better than the social worker but that the social worker pays no attention to what staff tell him about the families.

The difficulties which affect the relationship between the social worker and paraprofessional social service staff are chiefly due to the seniority gap, the sex difference, the age difference (he is younger than paraprofessional staff), lack of experience and particular characteristics of the social worker. There are also basic conflicts at this center between professional social work perspectives and the perspectives of paraprofessional staff. Thus, the social work supervisor DE notes that paraprofessionals tend "to do things for parents" rather than encouraging autonomy on the parents' part; they reject psychological causation of problems, particularly when it touches them personally; they evidence inadequate self-management of feelings; and they overdo confidentiality: "This is a problem....They don't trust the agency and I think they don't understand the meaning of confidentiality. They don't understand that the agency can really protect the information....The concept of receiving information as a paid employee and the information not really belonging to the worker is a concept difficult for them to grasp." DE singles out the family assistant as being particularly secretive and protective of her information. Indeed, paraprofessional staff at the center do not transmit to the social worker and the agency what they consider to be confidential information. The family assistant, RU, states that each staff member "has to figure out what you tell and what you don't tell." The family worker VW says that "If it's personal business, like marital problems, it does not belong to the agency and I don't tell the social worker."

CHAPTER 12

INTER-CENTER COMMONALITIES AND VARIATIONS IN WORK RELATIONS

TIME ONE

Attitudes toward the employment of paraprofessionals in the social work component of Head Start are less than enthusiastic, as compared with the attitudes held toward the use of paraprofessionals in the teaching field. Although professionals are gratified that paraprofessionals relieve them from performing routine (albeit crucial) chores so that they can concentrate on core social work tasks, they are not satisfied with the general performance of paraprofessionals, their work ethic and the generally poor relations between paraprofessionals and themselves. Even at Adams, where work relations are not conflictful, the social worker holds a skeptical attitude about the value of paraprofessionals for the Head Start program: She sees the value of paraprofessional employment as accruing only to paraprofessionals themselves--this is the only type of work for which paraprofessionals, who are deficient in education and job skills, are qualified--rather than to the program.

A factor in the ambivalent attitudes of professionals toward paraprofessionals consists in the fear of some professionals that paraprofessionals will be deemed capable of running the social work program by themselves and, therefore, that professionals will lose their jobs. Discussions were held at city-wide Head Start meetings during the period of the study which focused on the nature of the social worker's role. The social workers in our sample were exposed to conceptions emphasizing a consultant role for the social worker rather than a direct service and supervisory role. Social workers may have been understandably anxious and insecure about the role which might be assigned to them in the future and may have perceived paraprofessionals as threatening competitors. Two social workers

(Williams and Hull) state that professional standards of social work can be upheld only if paraprofessionals are properly supervised and trained by professional social workers and that centers cannot get along without a strong dose of professional expertise at the center level, which a mere consultant would not be able to provide.

The differentiation of roles between social worker and the paraprofessional social service staff varies across centers, although it is universally higher than role differentiation between teachers and teacher aides. Thus, at Williams and Hull, social workers do psychological counseling, develop community resources, and make contacts with agencies. At Adams only the social worker holds family-life discussions, attended by both staff and parents. At Jefferson the social worker shares casework with the family assistant, but she supervises the recruitment of families to the center and the medical program. Supervision at all centers is in the hands of the social worker, and this is resented and evaded at Williams, Hull and Jefferson. Two of the four social workers (Adams and Jefferson) make it a point occasionally to perform escort service or make coffee or lunch, so as to lessen the social distance between the aides and themselves.

At two of the centers (Williams and Hull) the social workers, casework specialists by training, neglect to supervise group work, that is, the work of social service aides in organizing parents for recreational, community action, and center governance purposes. The social worker at Jefferson, who is prepared to take part in and supervise parent activities, is prevented from doing so by the family assistant. It is only at Adams, where the social worker had specialized in group work and enjoys complete control of the social work program, that a social worker takes charge of all group work.

Role distinguishability between family assistants and family workers also varies across centers. Thus, at Williams both categories of aides generally perform the same tasks: recruitment of children and families, checking children's attendance and making follow-up home visits to ascertain reasons for absence, accompanying children for medical and dental examinations, organizing parents for recreational and community action purposes, acting as referral persons for the social worker, and miscellaneous duties such as escort service, babysitting and filling in gaps in personnel in the classroom or in the kitchen. At Hull the roles also overlap. At both these centers the social worker disapproves of this merging of roles and states a preference for the family assistant to exercise a supervisory function over family workers. At Jefferson, work tasks are to a large extent assigned on the basis of interest and special knowledge or concern, although the family assistant is generally in charge of parent activities.

Adams evidences a greater differentiation of roles between family assistants and family workers. Thus, the family assistants are in charge of parent groups which engage in the governance of the center and most parent clubs, whereas housekeeping, errand running and hostessing of the parent room are in the domain of family workers. This center thus differs from the others in that there is a clearer division of labor between family assistants and family workers, although some role components overlap. Also noteworthy is the fact that family workers do not appear to resent the higher salary and corresponding status of family assistants. This is understandable in view of the limited occupancy of positions--the maximum is two years--which was legislated by the parents' Personnel Practices Committee and the emphasis on offering a "career" of sorts to family workers by promoting them to the family assistant position when their first two years are up, over hiring to the assistant's position directly from the parent body. Thus, rather than resenting the higher salary of family assistants, family workers can look forward to a time when they themselves will occupy that position and receive that salary.

To conclude this discussion of role allocation, it should be noted that at all centers paraprofessionals manifest resentment of babysitting and escort service: they feel exploited both by the social worker who assigns them these duties and by the parents who require these services.

At none of our centers did professionals provide paraprofessionals with any formal orientation to the roles which they were expected to fill. Induction into these roles was most often performed through peer socialization--that is, a social service aide who had worked at the center for a period of time helping her newly-hired co-worker to effect the transition from parent (for those who had been parents) to employee of the center. At Adams, the social worker explicitly denies the value of easing a new paraprofessional into her job by formal explanation: she informs all newly-hired personnel that "it's a 'learn-as-you-go' job: you learn by doing."

Supervision of paraprofessionals varies from formal, scheduled group meetings (Hull and Jefferson) to nonscheduled individual conferences (Williams and Adams). Regular inservice training sessions are held at Hull by the social worker; at Williams they are conducted monthly by the consulting psychologist; and at Jefferson, they are held weekly by the social work supervisor for all social service personnel at the centers of the delegate agency. At Adams, the social worker felt the need to provide systematic training for her aides but she did not feel that she had the skills to do so.

At Hull and Jefferson, social service aides resist supervision by the social workers, in part because of their dichotomization of knowledge and skills--the social worker has book learning but they are superior in concrete experience with the life problems of the clientele.

At three of the centers (Williams, Hull and Jefferson), a well-defined bridging function for paraprofessionals is in operation and is accepted by both social workers and social service aides. Rather than parents going directly to the social worker, the paraprofessionals are intermediaries between the two parties: they see themselves as being friendly or neighborly in their relations to parents, whereas social workers are cold, impersonal and businesslike; they can reach the "deep part" of parents, that is, elicit attitudes and feelings which would not be so easily revealed to the professional. Paraprofessionals, once they have reached parents, may then induce them to seek help from the social worker if their problems are not amenable to paraprofessional expertise (Williams and Hull), or go back and forth between the parent and the social worker to get and give information, for instance, about outside agencies which may help alleviate the parent's problem (Jefferson). (At Hull, rather than performing a mediating function, the family assistant was felt by the social worker to be undermining her relations with parents.) At the above three centers the social service aides contributed to the social worker's understanding of the community's culture patterns and values. At Jefferson, contact with paraprofessionals and observation of their interpersonal style was deemed responsible by the social work supervisor for changing somewhat her professional practices, that is, her way of relating to parents.

Adams constitutes an exception to the general patterning of a linking role for paraprofessionals. The social worker denies that paraprofessionals perform a bridging function between parents and herself: she states that she learns as much directly from parents as from staff. The social service aides also disclaim a mediating role, stating that the social worker is well liked by parents. Nevertheless, at this center too, there is evidence that some parents feel more comfortable in talking to a paraprofessional who can be more of a "friend" to them than can the social worker and it is clear that, on occasion, the social worker uses a paraprofessional as a link to parents when she wants to make an out-reach effort to involve nonparticipating parents in the center program.

Paraprofessionals at all but one of the centers--Jefferson, where they feel closest to one another and believe they are seen by parents as social service workers--identify most closely with parents rather than with other paraprofessional staff or with the social worker. In their estimation, parents perceive them as parents like themselves, as neighbors or friends, rather than as staff members.

Two paraprofessionals, one each at Hull and at Adams, are uncomfortable with the parent identity: they would like to be perceived as staff members rather than peers because they feel that a certain degree of social distance is necessary to doing their best work. At any rate, all paraprofessionals at all the centers reject identification with the social worker--an identity which has negative connotations for most of them.

With the exception of the family assistant at Hull, none of the paraprofessionals had developed a sense of paraprofessional identity, which would imply the recognition of common interests among themselves and with paraprofessional teaching staff. Social service aides reason that each has special responsibilities not shared with the rest of the staff (Adams), that paraprofessional meetings would be divisive (Jefferson), that they have no problems in common with teacher aides (Adams and Jefferson), that meetings held in the absence of the social worker would be meaningless: they would not know what they were talking about (Adams and Jefferson).

Except at Adams, where the work ethic of paraprofessionals was considered satisfactory and commitment to work was said to be marked, complaints were voiced at the centers about the lack of punctuality of social service aides, their lack of dependability, their idleness and their negativism about following recommendations of professional staff. Furthermore, at Hull in particular, the social worker described her staff as lacking motivation, commitment and a sense of responsibility.

With the exception of Adams again, where relations between the social worker and social service aides are generally free of expressed conflict, work relations are characterized by tension, resentment, hostility and resistance to professional authority.

Antagonism toward the social worker is most marked at Hull and Jefferson. Sources of strain are status discrepancies between social workers and social service aides on the dimensions of age, residence and length of time of employment. Value conflict--that is, different perspectives on how to perceive and act on parent problems--loom large, particularly at Hull. At that center, attempts by the social worker to inculcate social work principles met with failure. The paucity of social work and supervisory experience on the part of the social worker at Jefferson, in view of the considerable experience of paraprofessional staff, is a cause for resentment and lack of respect for the social worker. The extent of disillusionment with the social worker at Jefferson reached the point of putting in question whether there was a need for a social worker at all. One family worker claims that the practice of social work requires only humanitarian principles and the social work degree is superfluous.

At Williams, the conflict between the professional and lay perspectives also affects work relations. Social work staff in this case avoid contact with the social worker whom they consider authoritarian--demanding, for instance, a level of parent participation which staff are not able to supply. This, of course, may be due, in part, to the physical separation at this center between the social worker, who operates out of the delegate agency headquarters, and the paraprofessional staff, stationed in the center site. Probably because of the infrequency of contact, the social worker is not aware of the true feelings of staff toward her, as are social workers at Hull and Jefferson.

At Adams, work relations are marked by good will and positive feelings toward the social worker. Although value differences prevail here, as at the other three centers, the social worker does not make an issue of the lack of professionalism with paraprofessional staff. She accepts staff as they are, being profoundly skeptical about the possibility of changing their attitudes through short-term training. There is no evidence, however, that her superior and condescending stance, based on her assessment of the high quality of the training she has been fortunate to receive at a leading social work school, is transmitted to her staff: They speak of the ease of communication with her, of having learned from her and being valued by her; they all think that the center could not function without the social worker. Although the social worker vacillates between giving orders and more egalitarian decision-making with staff, they feel that they are being consulted and listened to with respect. The one focus of contention is escort service, where the social worker insists that it be provided for parents whom she perceives as needing it, and that staff, although initially resistant, must eventually do her bidding.

TIME TWO

When we examine professional social workers' attitudes toward the employment of paraprofessionals, a mixed picture emerges. At Williams and Adams, attitudes were on the whole positive--indeed at Adams, the social worker had become more enthusiastic about her social service staff and claimed to have learned a great deal from them; at Williams, however, while emphasizing the invaluable role of paraprofessionals, particularly as concerns their superior oral communicational abilities (superior, that is, to professionals'), the social worker had reservations about the poor grammar and spelling evident in paraprofessionals' written reports to central office. At Hull, the social worker felt quite negative about her staff, the relationship between them having continued to deteriorate since Time One. At Jefferson, the social work supervisor and the social worker had reservations about the kind of social service paraprofessionals employed at the center--the social work supervisor feeling that they were too middle class in their aspirations, thus making them different from the parents they were serving, the social worker claiming on the contrary that their similarity to parents, while an advantage in bringing about greater understanding and closer communications, might also be detrimental because paraprofessionals would have the same problems as parents and they might feel hopeless about the parents' problems, inasmuch as they felt hopeless about their own. Thus, no clear view emerges as to what kind of paraprofessionals both the social work supervisor and the social worker feel would be most effective in the program.

There continued to be a high differentiation of roles between social worker and social service paraprofessionals at all our centers and the roles of family assistant and family worker also continued to overlap, which was a subject of concern at Williams and Hull. Professionals' supervision of social service staff was informal at Williams and Adams--consisting of individual conferences usually initiated by the paraprofessional; it was more formal at Hull and Jefferson, where group meetings were held. The social worker at Hull found supervision an extremely frustrating experience, as she claimed that the paraprofessionals did no true case recording in detail, which precluded discussion in depth of family problems of parents and that, at any rate, family workers listened only to the center director, not to her or the family assistant.

At Hull and Jefferson, and in contrast with Time One, the social workers questioned the necessity for social service staff to play a mediating role between parents and the professionals: at Hull, the social worker claimed that there was no gap to be bridged and that she related well to parents. At Jefferson also, the social work supervisor said that a good social worker could communicate directly with parents and that it was a "dirty excuse" that paraprofessionals were being used to interpret the social worker and parents to each other. At Adams, we find a reversal of attitude by the social worker in the opposite direction: in contrast to Time One, she claimed that paraprofessionals had educated her with respect to parent problems and that they had helped parents communicate with her.

The work relations between the social worker and social service staff continued to be characterized by conflict at Hull and Jefferson, as they were at Time One. At Hull, the social worker was deeply unhappy over her relationship to the paraprofessionals (with the exception of the family assistant). She felt she had made a minimal impact on the program, that staff did not evidence any "growth," that they did not follow her directions and she said that she had given up on supervision altogether. At Jefferson, paraprofessionals were extremely hostile and resentful toward their new social worker, who was a man where they were women, who was younger than they, inexperienced where they felt they were experienced and, in addition, was cold and unfriendly and unable to supervise them, both because of his lack of knowledge of the Head Start program and of parents' problems and because he offended the paraprofessionals by giving orders from behind his desk and never going out into the field.

At Williams, paraprofessionals appeared to have less difficulty in relating to the social worker than they experienced at Time One. Yet, although the social worker was receptive to paraprofessionals' ideas, the latter felt that the social worker had her way in the end. Nonetheless, as one paraprofessional put it, "We all feel like one big family, there's not that feeling of the professional and the paraprofessional."

At Adams, work relations continued to be satisfactory from the social worker's point of view, although reservations were entertained by the paraprofessionals. One paraprofessional was specifically rejecting of "social work jive," whereby parents' questions about what action they should take on a problem were met by the social worker in the form of another question: "What do *you* want to do?" which was construed by the paraprofessional to be an evasion of the social worker's duty to provide specific answers to specific problems.

At all centers (except Adams), professional and lay perspectives on how to service parents clashed as they did at Time One. At Williams, the social worker criticized the lack of professionalism among paraprofessionals in their attitudes to parents: they formed too close a relationship to certain parents and made inappropriate confidences to them, negative feelings got expressed to some parents. The gist of the criticism was that paraprofessionals did not know how to cope with a "work-friendship" relationship and that they did not seem to be able to assume the proper stance of "detached involvement" characteristic of professional social workers.

At Jefferson, as at Hull, the social worker pointed out that paraprofessionals do things for parents rather than permitting self-determination, that they reject psychological causation of problems, that they evidence inadequate self-management of feelings, and that they overdo confidentiality, that is, that they do not transmit to the agency what they consider to be confidential information imparted to them by parents.

Adams is the only center where there was no noticeable disjunction between the perspectives of social worker and paraprofessionals--which contrasts with the situation as it was at Time One. Obviously the social worker has been successful in transmitting some professional social work values to her staff: Thus, she said, they now respect the right of parents to make their own decisions, they tend to treat all parents with respect and have learned to manage their own feelings, they have come to understand the concept of emotional difficulties, they have become more aware of themselves and become less judgmental of others. Finally, the difference of time perspective in solving parents' problems has become attenuated as compared with Time One: Paraprofessionals are now more aware of the length of time needed for successful intervention in people's lives.

PART IV

CHAPTER 13

SUMMARY AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Summary

Whereas teachers' attitudes toward the use of paraprofessional teacher aides are uniformly positive and all the teachers (except one at Hull) are accepting of their aides, social workers (except at Adams) are found to be less than enthusiastic in their attitudes toward paraprofessional social service aides. They are especially dissatisfied with the job performance of their aides, their, to them, unsatisfactory work ethic and the generally conflictful character of their own relations with the aides.

Certainly one factor explaining the contrast in professionals' attitudes toward the utilization of paraprofessionals between the sphere of teaching and that of social work may be the novelty of the utilization of paraprofessionals in social work, whereas there is a long tradition of employment of untrained or semi-trained personnel (aides, parents, etc.) in preschool settings (nursery schools and day care centers). None of the social workers in our sample had had any previous experience in training or working with paraprofessional assistants, nor had their own training exposed them to what was then a non-existent practice. This contrasts with the situation in teaching, where teachers, even when they have not, prior to their employment in Head Start, taught preschool children, are well aware of the long-standing practice of using nonprofessional assistants in the classroom.

The teaching component at the centers is marked by minimal differentiation of roles between professionals and paraprofessionals. On the other hand, a high differentiation of roles characterizes the relations between social workers and social service aides.

Socialization of teacher aides by teachers, in the form of formal supervision, is absent at the centers: It is replaced by informal chats when the opportunity presents itself, but on the whole there is a minimum of abstract verbal explanation on the part of teachers, and teacher aides learn management and teaching skills mainly by observing teachers. Supervision of social service aides is carried out by social workers, either through formal meetings or through individual conferences; however, there is minimal supervision of paraprofessionals' group work with parents, mainly because all but one of the social workers are caseworkers by training, not group workers or generic social workers.

The concept of the bridge--in which paraprofessionals act as intermediaries between professionals and parents--is actualized in some cases in the teaching sphere and seems to be maximally realized in social work. It appears that, where the ethnicity of teacher, aide, and parents is the same (mainly white in Adams and black in Williams and Jefferson), the existence of a bridging function for aides is denied (Williams and Adams); it is affirmed in only one instance (Jefferson). At Hull, where the teachers are white and the aides black or Spanish-speaking and where some of the parents are black and some Spanish-speaking, and at Williams, in the instance where the teacher is Spanish-speaking and the aide black and the parents are also black, aides are said to bridge the gap between parents and the teacher.

In the social work sphere, a bridge appears to operate irrespective of the congruence or noncongruence of ethnicity among the social workers, social service aides and parents. The bridge concept appears to be built into the role requirements of the paraprofessionals' work: They approach parents, attempt to involve them in the center programs and governance, perform services for them and refer them to the social worker when they present psychological problems. It would be well nigh impossible for the social worker singlehandedly to serve the large population of parents at the centers. Secondly, social service aides perceive themselves as being attuned to the interpersonal style of parents, as being friendly and neighborly, whereas they perceive the social workers as cold and impersonal. Thus, they see themselves as bridging the distance in emotional stance and interpersonal style between parents and the social worker. It should be noted that the perceptions which operate here are confined to the social work component of Head Start; they do not apply to the teaching component. It should also be noted that, at Time Two, the social worker at Hull center and the social work supervisor for Jefferson center questioned the existence of a communication gap to be bridged by paraprofessionals.

Teacher aides (with the exception of one aide at Hull) identify with their respective teachers. This sense of identification is determined by children, parents and by the teacher, that is, all parties to interaction with the aides reinforce aides' identification with the teacher. On the other hand, social service aides identify, not with the social worker, but with the parents they serve. They also see parents as perceiving them as parents, neighbors and friends, rather than as staff members. At any rate, there is no question but that social service aides vigorously reject any sense of identification with the social worker, an identification that would have negative connotations for them.

Neither teacher aides nor social service aides have developed a sense of separate identity as paraprofessionals: they feel that they have no problems in common, that meetings from which professionals are excluded would be divisive, that they have no particular grievances, etc. Certainly one factor hindering the possibility of paraprofessional solidarity is the small population base of paraprofessionals at the centers (two to five persons in the teaching and social work components, respectively).

The work ethic of teacher aides is deemed favorable by teachers, whereas it is considered poor for social service aides, the latter being habitually late for work, undependable and often idle. It might, of course, be posited that the conditions of work in the teaching component--which imply the presence at centers of a large number of children for a specified period of time--require the attendance of both teacher and aide for that period of time. Lack of punctuality of the aide or lack of involvement in classroom activities are structurally unfeasible. Similar time demands do not apply to social service aides in the same structurally inescapable way.

Finally, work relations in the teaching domain are generally egalitarian and harmonious. While the educational perspectives of teachers and aides mostly diverge, no open conflict ensues. In fact, teachers and aides are either unaware of these differences or do not consider them important. On the other hand, work relations between social workers and their aides are characterized by tension, resentment and hostility. One factor which accounts for the tenor of interpersonal relations in the social work domain may be the status discrepancies between social workers and aides on the dimensions of age, residence and seniority on the job (Hull and Jefferson). At all centers there are also fundamental value incongruences between social workers and their aides which focus on the manner in which parents are to be served. It is noteworthy that, at precisely the center where the social worker did not make an issue of the lack of professionalism on the part of her aides (Adams), at Time Two the paraprofessionals had become more "professional." An unanswered question is why the aides moved to a value perspective more congruent with the professional perspective of the social worker in view of what she claims have been minimal training efforts on her part.

In general, in our analysis of work relations between professionals and paraprofessionals, we have found marked differences between the teaching component and the social work component of Head Start.

Teachers and teacher aides share equally in the performance of most work tasks, teacher aides identify closely with teachers and work relations appear to be egalitarian, cooperative and amiable despite the existence of value conflicts centered on their respective philosophies of education. In the social work field, on the other hand, a marked division of labor prevails between the social worker and social service aides, the paraprofessionals identify closely with the parents rather than with the social worker, and work relations are tense and conflictful in part because of serious value conflicts over the appropriate manner of servicing parents.

Interpretation of Findings

The question raised by the different tenor of work relationships in education as contrasted with social work is: Why are the value conflicts between the lay and professional subcultures which characterize both education and social work not productive of serious interpersonal tension in the teaching area, whereas similar value conflicts in social work become salient and lead to inordinate difficulties in the interpersonal relations between social workers and social service aides?

We propose to explain the differences in interpersonal relations between teaching and social work personnel by positing several contextual factors which differentiate the spheres of education and social work:

Paraprofessional Pre-Employment Experience: Role Continuity vs. Role Discontinuity

Role performance in the teaching component of Head Start is very much abetted by the fact that most paraprofessionals have young children. Thus, teacher aides have personal experience which is useful in the enactment of their work roles and this is recognized by some teachers who state that teacher aides have the ability to manage and teach children in the classroom by virtue of their own parental experience.

Social service staff, on the other hand, do work which seldom puts to use their knowledge as parents. The types of experience which social work requires--ability to deal with adults, to help them solve their problems, to refer them to community agencies--are not necessarily initially possessed by social service staff who, prior to getting jobs, may have had little experience in helping extra-familial adults.

Thus, social service staff may be disadvantaged, as compared with teacher aides, in developing roles, gaining the full acceptance of professionals, and thus developing a mutually cooperative relationship with them.

Paraprofessional Perception of the Teaching and Social Work Professions

Although our evidence is slim on this point, we think that there are differences for paraprofessionals in past experience with and general stereotypes of teachers and social workers.

Past experience with teachers is obviously pervasive and we can speculate that paraprofessionals, either as children or as parents of school-aged children, may have positive as well as negative feelings about teachers. Thus, whatever the exact nature of the stereotype held of teachers, it is probably mixed rather than all good or bad. On the other hand, whether the familiarity with social workers is direct--based mainly on experience with welfare caseworkers--or is mediated through hearsay, paraprofessionals hold generally negative views of the social work profession because social workers are perceived basically as dispensing charity and thus inevitably as patronizing their clients.

Furthermore, teaching is seen by women in our society generally as a worthwhile occupation to aspire to, particularly for women at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. This is less the case for the social work profession. Thus, some of the paraprofessionals in our sample aspire to reach the status of teacher and are taking college courses in order to do so. Only one person in our social work paraprofessional sample had the desire to attain social worker status, perhaps because it involves a set of hard-to-fathom constructs and an interpersonal-professional stance, the point of which is hard to grasp.

Differences in Teachers' and Social Workers' Valuation of their Professional Training and Ideology

Because teachers claim to have learned little in college about teaching and claim to have learned the most from student teaching and actual teaching experience, they may feel that teacher aides can learn as they did, by observing the teacher and modeling themselves after her. An explicit educational ideology is probably not involved in this process, that is, it does not impinge on the teacher's teaching or on the teacher aide's learning.

Social workers, on the other hand, are not inclined to minimize their graduate training. Their internalization of social work values and perspectives derives from schooling as well as social work placements, where their work was constantly evaluated by a social work supervisor. It is more difficult for these values and perspectives to be internalized by social service paraprofessionals outside a training center than it is for teacher aides to learn the handling of children, curriculum materials and ideas, and techniques of presentation from the teachers.

Also, teaching's abstract base of knowledge, as currently taught in most teacher training institutions, is less demanding than the body of knowledge which underlies social work and which is conveyed through two additional years of graduate training (which include intensive supervised field experience). Thus, teachers' attempts to teach teacher aides their lore and have them participate fully on an equal basis in classroom work may meet with greater success, whereas social workers' attempts to inculcate a disciplined outlook on social work problems and techniques are most often rebuffed.

Ecological Factors in the Patterning of Paraprofessional Performance and Socialization

Why do the different perspectives of teachers and teacher aides about the aims and emphases of early childhood education not clash more than they do?

The teacher aide puts primary emphasis on what is a secondary emphasis of the teacher, namely, the inculcation of beginning academic skills (writing one's name, learning numbers and the ABCs). Feelings are more taken for granted in the perspective of the teacher aide. For the teacher, on the other hand, the feeling life of children (attitudes toward school, excitement about learning, self-concept) is a major subject of thought and a major focus of action. Teacher aides, rather than being concerned with attitudes and general dispositions, are more concerned with concrete manifestations of prowess, as harbingers of future achievement and social mobility.

But, in the course of the day or week, some time is allotted to the teaching of academic skills, so that learning does occur in this area. The teacher aide is satisfied that her ideas are not being ignored in the classroom, even if they are not the major emphasis. She probably realizes, if only unconsciously, that the most "natural" activity for young children is play and, while she may not be fully convinced that children also learn concepts through play, she is willing to settle for less than a wholly academic emphasis in school. A working consensus thus exists in which the minor emphasis of the one is balanced against the major emphasis of the other.

Thus, the differential educational values and goals of professionals and paraprofessionals are accommodated within the micro-system of the classroom. We may speculate that this accommodation is almost mandated by the ecological context of teaching. That is, the classroom is a closed system wherein two adults are constantly visible to each other and therefore must "get along" if they are to perform satisfactorily.

On the other hand, differences between the social worker and social service aides are not the focus of accommodation and compromise leading to a mutually acceptable style of servicing parents. That the role incumbents are virtually invisible to one another when enacting their roles may be a crucial factor.

These ecological conditions also affect the patterning of socialization of paraprofessionals by professionals. The teacher performs her role "onstage," whereas the social worker performs the core part of her work "backstage." Thus professional models of behavior are differentially available to teacher aides and social service aides.

Likewise, because the behavior of teacher aides is highly visible to teachers, the latter can influence their aides in the immediate context, whereas the behavior of social service aides is less visible to the social worker, who must therefore reconstruct situations and pass judgment away from specific action contexts. The mode of socialization which is implied is thus concrete and visual for teacher aides, while for the social service aides it is more abstract and unseen.

We may speculate that paraprofessionals feel less comfortable with more abstract, less contextual modes of supervision and we posit that this may help to explain the higher interpersonal accommodation in classrooms and the more conflictful relations in the social work sphere.

Discontinuities with Respect to Interpersonal and Self-Presentation Styles

The social work perspective demands self-discipline and self-control and prescribes the use of oneself in a carefully planned, engineered fashion. This perspective clashes with the "lay" outlook on human relations and the lay interpersonal style between adults: "natural," spontaneous, directive. For the social worker the self is an instrument--emotionally detached from the client and operating in a non-directive way, though often manipulating the client toward a predetermined course of action. The lay interpersonal style is direct, authoritative in advice-giving, enactive; relationships with clients are characterized by moral judgment and emotional involvement. Furthermore, because paraprofessional social work staff are closely identified with the parents they service and with whom they share common problems, it may be more difficult for them to adopt the professionally-hallowed attitude of detachment toward them and their problems.

On the other hand, teacher aides, who are expected to be nurturant toward and supportive of children, may regard such qualities as perfectly congruent with their lay perspective. In teaching there is less of a gap between the professionally-approved way of relating to children and the indigenous interpersonal style and mode of self-presentation. Some objectivity, it is true, is required on the part of teacher aides but, in contrast with social work aides who are closely identified with parents, they are not so closely identified with the children that they cannot remove themselves psychologically and adopt a more neutral stance wherein they model themselves on teachers in exploring causes of child behavior and handling problems as teachers do.

Orientation toward Social Mobility

Social service staff want to remake social work to suit the style of parents. Teacher aides accept the middle-class world of teaching, being willing, for example, to look for the causes of child behavior, as the teachers themselves demonstrate and encourage the aides to do. Social service staff are averse to accepting the causal themes of social workers. This could be because for their children paraprofessionals identify with a middle-class world, are oriented to upward social mobility for children and require middle-class ministrations to achieve it, whereas for adults they are oriented to the here-and-now world.

Generalizability of Findings

This study of work relations between professionals and paraprofessionals in a small sample of Head Start centers in the New York metropolitan area raises the question of the representativeness of our findings and their generalizability to other Head Start centers.

Clearly-patterned differences set off work relations among teaching staffs from work relations among social service staffs. We believe that the reasons for these differences inhere, as we have speculated in the section above, in ecological, structural and interpersonal factors which differentiate the teaching domain from the social service domain, rather than in factors of individual personality or peculiarities of the centers in the sample. The centers were selected to include a range of center sizes, sponsorship and ethnicity. Thus, we feel confident that our findings would be applicable to other centers having similar characteristics as the ones in our sample.

It will be remembered that the work relations between the members of one teaching dyad at Hull center were markedly strained and authoritarian, in contrast to the more egalitarian and harmonious relations prevailing among other teaching dyads at this and other centers. We can surmise that a survey type study netting a large number of centers would uncover more relationships of this type, particularly if it included Head Start centers sponsored by public school systems which, due to their bureaucratic and hierarchical character, would be more likely to foster work relations of a similar nature between teachers and teacher aides.

We are cautious in generalizing our findings beyond New York, since state and local laws, for example, on licensing of teachers in Head Start vary across the country and may permit, contrary to what is the case in New York City, the employment as teachers of persons who do not have college degrees. Work relations between professionals without degrees and paraprofessionals may be very different where licensing laws do not follow the New York State pattern. The type of community where Head Start centers are located--rural, small town, small city, etc. --may also affect the nature of work relations, although we are not able to specify in what ways.

Whereas the professionals and paraprofessionals in our sample may be presumed to be similar in many ways to their counterparts in other parts of the country, differences may exist which would affect the generalizability of findings reported here. Nonetheless, our findings should prove suggestive of patterns that would be obtained elsewhere if further studies were contemplated using similar procedures.

CHAPTER 14

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teaching: Teacher-Teacher Aide Roles and Relationships

A striking characteristic of Head Start--and particularly of the teaching component of Head Start--is the uneasy coexistence of polar principles of social organization, namely both stratification and egalitarianism.

There are considerable salary differences between ranks in Head Start. These ranks are also distinguished by the use of different titles. It might be expected that if stratification were a pervasive principle of organization, the allocation of work functions would be correspondingly stratified (different work specifications for unequal rewards) and that role relations would be of a hierarchical type.

But this is not the case. Work is markedly similar across ranks. The teacher aide performs the same work tasks as the teacher, who reserves for herself only writing reports and holding parent-teacher conferences--and even this is not always the case. Teachers also share in such tasks as housekeeping and toileting children. In many centers it is almost impossible to distinguish the teacher from the teacher aide when observing in a classroom. Furthermore, although the teacher sets the tone of the classroom and formulates the activity schedule, she appears to invite an egalitarian relationship with the aide in that she is open to suggestions from the aide and encourages him or her to assume responsibility for areas of the classroom and for group or individual activities.

The pervasive egalitarianism in work roles and work loads observed in Head Start poses difficulties to the enactment of a genuine career ladder, if such is contemplated for Head Start. If a career ladder is instituted, with positions reflecting differences in titles and salaries (e.g., teacher aide, assistant teacher, associate teacher, etc.), the work associated with these distinctions should be differentiated. Yet it appears that in institutions providing care and education for very young children, such role differentiation is very difficult to enact. The only factor which might justify the differences in salaries and titles is the fact that ultimate responsibility for a given group of children resides with the teacher, and both teachers and teacher aides perceive this as an important factor.

Beyond this consideration, titles and salaries reflect only differences in length of schooling and certification of that schooling, taking no account of what work professionals and paraprofessionals perform and how they perform it. In view of the current attacks on credentialism and the "credentials society," a real dilemma is posed by the lack of match between work and the reward structure. In the light of the controversy regarding the accreditation of teachers, more thought needs to be given to the kinds of differentiation of roles between teacher and teacher aide which have meaning in terms of differential backgrounds, training and final responsibility in the classroom.

Social Work: Roles, Skills, Recruitment of Personnel, Self-Identity

Whether as full-time supervisor or consultant, the social worker needs qualifications which are too often lacking in Head Start social workers: generic social work skills, that is, group work and community organization experience, as well as the casework skills which most social workers possess. They also need supervisory skills: their social work training has prepared them for professional-client relationships, not for professional-paraprofessional assistant relations.

In recruiting staff, social workers should not be hired last, that is, after paraprofessionals have been hired, because paraprofessional staff may establish "a way of doing things" that will be highly resistant to subsequent professional influence and may cause difficult professional-paraprofessional relationships. Everything possible should be done to minimize the extant high turnover of social workers, so that they, in conjunction with paraprofessionals, have an opportunity to establish a mutually acceptable style of servicing families.

There ought to be a clearer conceptualization of roles, client problems and expertise possessed by professionals and paraprofessionals. Thus, social service staff should be made aware of the components of one another's jobs and the contributions each makes to the total operation. The social worker's role in particular should be more clearly defined and legitimated. There should also be a clearer differentiation between the family assistant and the family worker roles so that differences in types of work and work loads are congruous with differences in titles and salaries.

The knowledge which social workers bring to bear on client problems, as against the kind of knowledge which paraprofessional staff possess, should be clearly spelled out, so that division of labor can be more rational. Finally, the classes of client problems encountered in Head Start centers should be so defined that a match may ensue between client problem, type of service, and provider of service.

The social worker's sense of inadequacy, in part because she lacks the generic social work skills which employment in Head Start requires, is reinforced by her isolation from a network of social work colleagues--a "reference" community--who ordinarily, in typical social work settings, provide support, consultation and supervision and validate social workers' professional identity. Consideration should be given to providing support to Head Start social workers in the form of regular meetings and consultation among peers working in Head Start centers in a delimited geographical area, as well as consultation with more knowledgeable social workers who have had experience in working with paraprofessionals over the years. Such arrangements might do much to counter some Head Start social workers' self doubts about their identity as bona fide professionals, wherein they might question the applicability of the term "professional" to themselves, as in the case of one social worker in our sample who felt uncomfortable because being a professional implied that she "had all the answers from a higher place."

Socialization of Staff

Orientation. Full orientation to the nature of the program and the differentiated roles which staff are expected to enact should be provided for each staff member by supervisory staff at the beginning of employment. This would obviate the present practice of leaving it to incumbent staff to socialize new staff members, such as teacher aides orienting new teachers, with resulting reversals of role relationships, which are difficult to alter thereafter.

Inservice training. Conflicting values and perspectives between professionals and paraprofessionals on the appropriate ways to educate children and service families, which are usually implicit in styles of practice, should be articulated in the early stages of employment, and compromises should be reached in the light of the best current educational and social work theories, always to be amended as further developments in these theories occur. It should be recognized that paraprofessionals have ways of relating to both children and adults which may be more attuned to their interpersonal styles than those of professionals. After these children and adults have been reached, however, some of their problems may be more adequately defined and attended to and their potentials more fully realized by direct professional ministrations. Paraprofessionals are assumed to have greater know-how, language skills and rapport with clientele to get them involved in the program and also to help them cope with environmentally-based problems (housing, welfare, etc.), but professionals have training in personal problems and can make diagnoses and proper referrals more readily.

Professional solutions ought not to be imposed unilaterally on paraprofessionals. Yet, it was observed in university-based inservice training for paraprofessionals that they are more amenable to a didactic approach to learning than to a free-wheeling discussion wherein they are asked to find their own solutions to questions asked by trainers. Thus, it seems that a combination of didactic presentation of content followed by a period of discussion, where paraprofessionals can react from their own perspective, would be desirable.

Paraprofessionals should be encouraged to formulate their own styles of teaching and social work. They should not become carbon copies of teachers and social workers. For example, just as a teacher is encouraged, at least in the best teacher-training institutions, to develop a style which, while based on the training, is also congruous with his or her personality, so a teacher aide can also be stimulated to enact a kind of practice which can be integrated with his or her indigenous ways of coping with the world.

Since education and social work are chancy ventures at best, paraprofessionals should be made aware of the "iceberg" nature of these fields. That is, what is definite, validated knowledge, is only the tip of the iceberg. Much about human nature has uncertain foundations and thus demands trying out various alternatives, solutions, and styles. Tolerance of ambiguity and recognition of the limitations of professional knowledge should be consciously inculcated in paraprofessionals.

Inservice training should focus on what, in effect, is an overdoing, on the part of social service paraprofessionals, of the principle of confidentiality. They carry this principle too far, both in omissions in record writing and in their reluctance, at staff meetings, to keep professionals fully informed of the status of families. Training would take the form of making sure that no gossip ensues outside the center but that sharing of information between center staff is absolutely essential to servicing both children and parents. Paraprofessionals do not record all the information which they have concerning families nor do they always bring to bear all the information in their possession when a child is being discussed at staff meetings. They identify so much, or overidentify, with the parents (who may say: Don't tell this to anyone, to the social worker, etc.) that they are unwilling to divulge all their knowledge to each other or to professionals. Furthermore, it is not impossible that the social service paraprofessionals think that their status is enhanced by having information in their possession which the social worker does not have. In general, however, the problem of overdoing confidentiality arises because the relations between paraprofessionals and parents are felt to be personal. Paraprofessionals should be taught to understand that these relationships are personal and yet not entirely so, if only because the continuity of the center's program and parents' participation in it, as well as the possibility that the paraprofessional may leave, mandate the sharing and recording of information.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

Our description and interpretation of work relations in the teaching and social work spheres of Head Start lead to the obvious conclusion that these relations are infinitely more problematic for social workers and social service aides than for teachers and teacher aides.

Thus, we recommend that social work consultation services and inservice training in the social work area should involve both parties to the conflict (instead of only the paraprofessionals) and should be addressed to the value differences between professionals and paraprofessionals, making them the focus of awareness and arriving at a resolution wherein, even if each retains her own values and interpersonal style, each will be tolerant of the other's patterns and understand the bases of their differences. One might also speculate that even if acculturation is desired to minimize strain, its direction need not necessarily flow from the social worker to the social service aides but the reverse may be preferable. An analogy is offered by some psychotherapists whose styles have shifted toward being more directive, authoritative and action-oriented, especially when they treat non-middle-class patients.* This type of resolution, which would involve a change in values and interpersonal style on the part of social workers who deal with low-income paraprofessionals and clients may entail a reevaluation of principles for the social work profession.

---

*Spiegel, John P. Some cultural aspects of transference and countertransference. In Frank Riessman, John Cohen, & Arthur Pearl (Eds.), Mental Health of the Poor. New York: Free Press, 1964. Pp. 303-320.

APPENDIX

THE MEANING OF WORK: PARAPROFESSIONALS' WORK EXPERIENCE IN RELATION TO SELF-IMAGE, STATUS, PERFORMANCE OF FAMILY ROLES AND FURTHER SCHOOLING

This section is based on data which were gathered incidentally from ten paraprofessionals (five teacher aides and five social service aides) at three of the centers (Williams, Hull and Jefferson). The theme of the meaning of work for paraprofessionals' lives outside the Head Start centers was not part of our original design. Rather, it became a focus for data gathering when we were preparing a paper for presentation at the American Educational Research Association meetings in February 1971, at a symposium on "The Parent as Educational Agent" ("Work Relations between Professionals and Paraprofessionals in Head Start," New York City, February 1971). The data which we gathered and which we are reporting here is, we feel, highly suggestive and promising and would seem to warrant further research into the interconnections between work experience in Head Start and paraprofessionals' lives in other settings.

Teacher Aides

Teachers and aides are unanimous that the aides are "more involved" in their present jobs in Head Start than in their previous jobs (which were unskilled, such as factory work and work in restaurants). The aides' self-image was enhanced through their feelings of increased adequacy and interpersonal competence. For instance, one aide mentions that prior to her Head Start job experience she talked very little, but that the job "has gotten all that 'embarrass,' 'shy' out of me." Another aide who "lived alone and saw nobody" claims that the job has quieted down her doubts about herself; she feels that she is now "as good as an expert."

The job is felt to be intrinsically status-enhancing (in reference to jobs in manufacturing and low-skilled services). As one aide puts it: "It makes me feel big. I feel proud being with different people. On the street all I hear is: 'Miss U, Miss U...' Children say to their friends: 'That's my teacher.'" The children are thus validating the aide's status as a co-teacher rather than as teacher aide--the official status.

Another aide perceives the job as bringing some variety into her life and relief from what are at times burdensome chores: "It's not really a job to me. It's like coming out and getting away from everything, as far as the house and the kids and the cleaning....To me it means like freedom...like a breakaway.... It's like getting away from the same routine every day....Instead of just cleaning, cooking, washing clothes, going to the store, it's something different, coming out and doing some work."

The work experience of teacher aides and social service aides in the study centers has had some consequences for their role as educational agents in their own family setting. While we have not observed these effects in the home--indeed to demonstrate that they occurred would have required pre- and post-employment observations--they have been reported to us in interviews.

The following kinds of outcomes were mentioned by teacher aides:

1. Better understanding and management of their own children. Two teacher aides report that they have made a transition from corporal punishment to reasoning and a more psychological approach to their children's misbehavior. They used to spank them or beat them; now they talk to their children, ask them what their problems are, ask them to explain the whys and wherefores of their misbehavior; they seem to be more aware of psychological causation.

2. Transfer of Head Start play materials and activities to the home. Teacher aides refer to having learned how to make play dough and how to paint, which they encourage their children to do at home. One teacher aide bought a

blackboard so that her children could put problems on the board and work them out. Another teacher aide learned at Head Start the cognitive and affective functions of water play, so that, whereas before her Head Start experience she did not understand why her children wanted to engage in water play, she now encourages them to do so.

3. Initiation of a central school activity in the home, namely, reading books to their children, which several teacher aides mention as not having done before.

4. Acquisition of a comparative perspective on children of the same age range as their own children, which gives them some idea of child development norms and enables them to develop realistic behavior expectations for their own children. Thus, one teacher aide reports that she thought her son was retarded and she therefore "pushed" him; she has come to realize the latitude of expectable behaviors for a child his age. Another aide points out that her experience in Head Start made her realize that other children than her own also did "stupid things" and so she does not get so upset with her own children anymore.

5. And finally, one teacher aide mentions that through her experience of working with a teacher in Head Start she has acquired a better understanding of school situations and the problems teachers face generally, and she can therefore respond more adequately to her own children when they report on their school experiences and problems with teachers.

Social Service Aides

One family worker extensively discussed the meaning of her work for her. She felt that her job had increased her status in the community: "People in the community see the change in my dress, they see me walking around with papers.... Your whole attitude changes in a job like this....People...look at me differently ....We had elections for the Board of the Community Corporation and...several people came up to me and asked me why I didn't run....It was sort of satisfying that they should come with this suggestion." Her self-confidence and social skills improved: "I felt unsure about answering the telephone, I felt weird about calling someone to get information. Now I do it as a matter of routine." Her knowledge about Head Start and the larger world also deepened: She now understands how the center is organized and administered, where funds come from, the politics that are involved in funding, etc.

For another family worker, whose first job this is, the work has given her more self-confidence. She was at first doubtful that she could perform any kind of work, but now feels that she is ready to implement her original aspiration, which is to become a nurse. For still another family worker, the work has had three major consequences: It increased her sense of interpersonal competence; it has broadened her outlook on life--"I learn new things every day: government, the state, the city"; finally, it has helped her put her own problems in perspective--"The parents have worse problems than I have."

A family assistant also points to the implications the work has had for her life: She claims that it led to personal growth--she learned social skills: "The job took the 'shyness' out of me"; her self-esteem has increased--"I feel important because I am helping someone"; finally, she gets a great sense of personal satisfaction from the "gratitude" of the parents.

Social service aides have reported the following kinds of consequences of their employment in Head Start on their role as educational agents in the home:

1. One family assistant reports that she now reads to her child, trying to use dramatic expressions similar to the ones she has seen on the Head Start teacher's face, whereas prior to employment she never read books; a family worker teaches her daughter songs she has learned at the center.

2. As with teacher aides, family staff acquire a comparative perspective

within which to assess their own children's development and they may alter their own child-rearing procedures accordingly. Thus, one family worker learned from her Head Start experience to encourage her youngest daughter to become more independent, allowing her to make her bed and put her clothes away, which she had previously not permitted her older children to do when they were of the age of her youngest daughter in her pre-Head Start employment days. A family assistant no longer "pushes" her son, having learned that children develop at different rates. Another family assistant, through her contacts with parents, has become aware of different child-rearing methods and mother-child relationships, and she no longer assumes that her "way" is "the right way," thus making her more introspective about what her relationship to her child could or should be.

3. In the case of two family workers we have evidence that the sheer fact of working, that is, being away from their children a certain number of hours per day, may improve the quality of the mother-child relationship. One family worker mentions that she had less patience with her children prior to employment in Head Start when she was with them all day long, and that she now has it much easier with them, particularly at bedtime. Another family worker claims that when she was home all day her children got on her nerves and she was constantly criticizing them. Now that she is working and out of the house the greater part of the day, she feels that her children, in her words, "get relief from my presence," they "appreciate" her more when she comes home and are less difficult to handle.

4. We also have intimations that the husband-wife relationship may change, but we do not know what effects this has on the parent-child relationship. Thus, in one case, the paraprofessional reports that her husband now shares some of the household chores and, in another case, that the family worker has been suddenly attracted to the Women's Liberation movement, causing her to wonder about her

possible equality to her husband and how these feelings may affect her husband's authority in the family.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

Although the role of paraprofessionals as educational agents in their own homes was not the major focus of our study, the data which we gleaned on this subject indicate that, without the benefit of a systematic intervention program and by sheer interaction with professionals in Head Start and observation of classrooms, paraprofessionals transfer Head Start play materials and activities to the home, develop new perspectives on childhood and alter their interaction with their children. Whether they are teacher aides or social service aides and, despite the differences in work roles and relationships with professionals, paraprofessionals have derived from their work beneficial consequences for their role as parents in the home setting.

For a significant number of paraprofessionals, work experience in Head Start has also led to renewed interest in education and some paraprofessionals have returned to school: In our total sample of paraprofessionals at the four centers, we found that a family assistant is taking courses toward completion of high school; a teacher aide received her high school equivalency certificate; eight paraprofessionals are taking college courses; and two paraprofessionals received their college degree during the course of our field work.

We would like to point out that our findings on the effects of employment for paraprofessionals' self-concept and sense of worth are in line with those of Frank Riessman ("The 'Helper' Therapy Principle," Social Work, April 1965, 10, pp. 27-32), who posited that meaningful paraprofessional employment, with its accompanying satisfactions in the helping role, increases the image and self-worth of workers. As Charles Grosser has said ("Manpower Development Programs," in Charles Grosser, William E. Henry, and James G. Kelly (Eds.), Nonprofessionals in the Human Services, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1969, p. 122): "In a society which places the highest value on success in the world of work, there is no more potent device for enhancing self-esteem than meaningful, productive employment."